CF Finney 101

Charles Finney

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An Easy to Read
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By Himself
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An Outline of His "Systematic Theology"
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Sermons

1, WHO ARE WE TRYING TO FOOL? (Study Questions Available)
2. IDOLATRY AND THE FEAR OF GOD (Study Questions Available)

3. DOUBTFUL ACTIONS ARE SINFUL

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1. WHO ARE WE TRYING TO FOOL?
by Charles G. Finney

"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves"--James 1:22

Anyone who does not practice what he admits to be true is self-deceived.

Two classes of hypocrites exist among professing Christians--those that deceive others and those that deceive themselves. One class of hypocrites has a deceptive show of religion, cover up the enmity of their hearts against God, and lead others to think they are very pious people. Thus the Pharisees obtained the reputation of being remarkably pious by their show of religion, their alms, and their long prayers.

The other class does not deceive others but themselves. Their religion consists of a parcel of notions without regard to practice, and they deceive themselves to think they are good Christians. But they are destitute of true holiness. They are hearers of the Word but not doers. They love orthodox preaching and take great pleasure in hearing abstract doctrines exhibited. With imagination and glowing feeling, they view the character and government of God; but they are not careful to practice the precepts of God's Word.

It is highly probable that a number of readers are of this character. I do not know your names, but I want you to understand that if you are of this character, you are the person I am speaking to. I mean you. You hear the Word and believe it in theory, while you deny it in practice. You deceive yourselves. The Scripture proves it. Here you have an express "Thus saith the Lord" that all hearers are not doers and are self-deceivers.

TRUE SAVING FAITH

In the first place, you hear the Word and admit it to be true, but you do not truly believe it. Two things are necessary for evangelical or saving faith. The first is intellectual conviction after hearing truth. I do not mean merely the abstract truth but its bearing on you. The truth, in its relation to

you, or its bearing on your conduct, must be received intellectually. True faith includes a corresponding change of heart. When a man's mind is convinced, and he admits the truth in relation to himself, then there must be an application of it to himself. Both these states of mind are indispensable to true faith.

Intellectual conviction of the truth is not saving faith. But intellectual conviction, accompanied by a change of the affections, is saving faith. Therefore, true saving faith always brings a change in conduct. Just as certain as the will controls the conduct, men will act as they believe. Suppose I say to a man, "Do you believe this?" "Yes, I believe it." What does he mean--a mere intellectual conviction? He may have that but not have faith.

A man may even approve or agree with abstract truth. Many persons suppose faith is applauding for the character and government of God and the plan of salvation. They view it, however, abstractedly. When they hear an eloquent sermon on the attributes or government of God, they are excited about the glory and excellency displayed. They do not have a particle of true faith. The rational mind is so formed that it naturally approves of truth when viewed abstractedly.

The most wicked devils in hell love it, as long as they do not see it in relation to themselves. If the gospel did not interfere with their own selfishness, they would not only see it as true but would heartily approve it. The reason why wicked men and devils hate God is because they see Him in relation to themselves. Their hearts rise up in rebellion because they see Him opposed to their selfishness.

This is the source of a grand delusion among men in regard to Christianity. They see it as truth, and they rejoice in contemplating it. They do not apply it to themselves, and so they love to hear such preaching and say they are fed by it. But they go away and do not practice it!

Imagine a man who is sick, and his feelings are tender. In view of Christ as a kind and tender Savior, his heart melts, and he feels strong emotions towards Jesus Christ. Why? For the very same reason that he would feel strong emotions towards the hero of a romance. But he does not obey Christ. He never practices one thing out of obedience to Christ but views Him abstractedly and is delighted with His glorious and lovely

character. He himself remains in the gall of bitterness. Faith must be an efficient, moving faith that produces good works, or it is not the faith of the gospel and is no real faith at all

DOERS OF THE WORD

True Christianity consists in obedience. However much you may approve of Christianity, you have no faith unless you obey it. In saying that true faith consists in obedience, I do not mean outward obedience. But faith itself, true faith, works by love and produces action. There is no real obedience but the obedience of the heart. Love fulfills the law, and Christianity consists in the obedience of the heart with a corresponding change of life.

The man who hears the truth and approves it but does not practice it deceives himself. He is like the man beholding his natural face in a glass--he sees himself, goes his way, and immediately forgets what he looks like. (See James 1:23-24)

The state of mind that you mistake for Christianity--an intellectual conviction of truth and approval of it in the abstract--is as common to the wicked as to the good. This is why it is so difficult to convince sinners that they are opposed to God and His truth. Men are created so that they do approve of virtue and admire the character and government of God. They would approve and admire every truth in the Bible, if they could view it abstractedly and without any application to themselves. They can sit for years under preaching that holds up the truth in such a way that it has no practical bearing on themselves. Then they will never consider that they are opposed to God and to His government.

I am persuaded that great multitudes of unconverted souls can be found in all congregations where the abstract doctrines are preached. No doubt many come to church because they love orthodox preaching. But after all this preaching, still they are not doers of the Word. And here is the difficulty: they have not had that searching preaching that made them see the truth in its bearing on themselves.

Now that they are in the Church, whenever the truth is preached in its practical relation to them, they show that their hearts are unchanged by opposing the truth.

They took it for granted that they were Christians and joined a church to

hear sound doctrinal preaching. They read the Bible and approve of it. If their faith is not practical enough to influence their conduct, or if they do not view the truth in relation to their own practice, then their faith does not affect them as much as the faith of the devil. (See James 2:19)

Great injury has been done by false representation of the wickedness of real Christians. Many impressions suggest that real Christians are the most wicked beings on the face of the earth. When they sin, they incur great guilt. For a Christian to sin is highly criminal. Enlightened Christians see great wickedness in their sins. When they compare their obligations with their lives, they are greatly humbled and express their humility in very strong language.

But it is not true that they are as bad as the devil or anywhere in the neighborhood of it. When they do sin, their sins have great aggravation and appear extremely wicked in the sight of God. But to suppose that men are true Christians while they live in the service of the devil is not only false but very dangerous.

HERETICS AND PHARISEES

The truth is that those who do not obey God are not Christians. The contrary doctrine is ruinous to the churches, filling them with multitudes whose claim to piety depends on their adoption of certain notions, while they never truly intended to obey the requirements of the gospel in their lives.

Professing Christians who never like to hear about God or His attributes but lay all stress on religious practice to the exclusion of Christian doctrines are Pharisees. They practice outward piety but will not receive the great truths that relate to God, and they deny the fundamental doctrines of the gospel.

Wherever you find a man's practice heretical, you may be sure his belief is heretical too. The faith that he hides in his heart is just as heretical as his life. He may not be heretical in his notions and theories. He may be right there, even on the very point where he is heretical in his practice. But he does not really believe it. For example, if you ask a careless sinner if he expects to die, he will reply, "Oh, yes, I know I must die; all men are mortal." As soon as he thinks about it, he assents to the truth. And if you could fasten the conviction of his mind until he is really and

permanently impressed with it, he would undoubtedly change his conduct and live for another world instead of this one. But he does not really believe he is going to die, and he continues grasping for wealth. A man's belief controls his practice, just as his will governs his conduct.

The Church has for too long been concerned with abstract doctrines and left the more practical out of view. Look at the creeds of the Church and see how the main emphasis lies on those doctrines that have little to do with our practice. A man may be the greatest heretic on points of practice, provided he is not openly profane or vicious, and maintain a good standing in the Church. When we attempt to purify the Church in regard to practical errors, he cannot bear it.

Why is it so difficult to get the Church to do anything for the conversion of the world? When will the Church be purified and the world converted? Not until it is agreed that heresy in practice is the proof of heresy in belief. Not while a man may deny the whole gospel in his practice every day and yet maintain his standing in the Church as a "Good Christian."

A minister can be deceived in regard to the state of his congregation. If he preaches a good deal on abstract doctrines that do not immediately relate to practice, his people rejoice; and he thinks they are growing in grace. In fact, it is no certain sign that there is any Christianity among them. But if he preaches practical doctrines and his people show that they love the truth in regard to themselves practicing it, then they show they love the truth.

If a minister finds that his people rebel when he comes to press the practical doctrines, he can be sure that their Christianity is in a low state.

PRACTICE WHAT YOU BELIEVE

Many people suppose they are Christians from the emotions they feel in view of truth. But what they receive is truth presented to their minds in such a way that they do not see its bearing on themselves. If you present the truth to them, destroy their pride, and cut them off from their worldliness, they will resist it. Look at the Church. Many orthodox churches and orthodox Christians live and feed upon the abstract doctrines of religion from year to year. Then look further at their lives and see how little influence their professed belief has upon their practice. Do they have saving faith? It cannot be. I don't mean to say that none of

these church members are virtuous but that those who do not practice what they admit in theory deceive themselves.

Are you conscious that the gospel is producing a practical effect upon you, according to your knowledge? Is it weaning you from the world? When you receive any practical truth into your minds, do you love its application to yourself? Do you take pleasure in practicing it? If you are not growing in grace, becoming more and more holy, and yielding yourselves up to the influence of the gospel, you are deceiving yourselves.

Woe to that man who admits the truth and yet turns away and does not practice it. He is like the man who, seeing his natural face in a mirror, turns away and forgets what he looks like.

WHO ARE WE TRYING TO FOOL?

1. Anyone who does not _____

2. Two classes of hypocrites are: Those _____

and those _____

3. Class #1 has:

1. _____

2. They _____

and 3. lead _____

4. Who was thought remarkably pious? _____.

5. Class #2 has a religion consisting of a

and they deceive

.

6. Self-deceived hear the Word, admit

_____.

but do not

.

7. Two things are necessary for Saving Faith:

1. The truth in its bearing

must be

2. A corresponding change

_____.

8. What is not saving faith?

.

9. But

accompanied by a

saving faith.

10. The rational mind is so formed that it naturally

11. Why do wicked men and devils HATE God?

They see Him opposed to

12. What is the source of a grand delusion among men in regard to

Christianity?

.

13. For what reasons might an unrepentant sinner feel strong emotions toward

Jesus Christ?

14. TRUE CHRISTIANITY consists in _____.

15. TRUE FAITH works by _____ and produces

16. Real obedience is of _____

17. What state of mind is mistaken for Christianity? _____ .

18. Men are created so that _____

.

19. They would approve and admire every truth in the Bible if _____

20. People, who hearing preaching with no practical bearing on themselves,

might never consider _____

_____.

21. What is the difficulty why many are not doers of the Word? _____

_____.

22. Enlightened Christians see _____

_____.

23. The truth is that _____

_____.

24. Professing Christians who lay stress on practice and exclude Christian

doctrine are _____

25. Whenever you find a man's _____ heretical, you may

be sure _____

26. A man's belief controls _____

.

27. The Church has for too long been _____

and left _____

28. When will the church be purified and the world converted?

Not until _____

_____.

Not while _____

_____.

29. Many people suppose they are Christians from _____

_____.

30. What do unconverted people resent? If you present _____

_____, destroy _____ and cut them off _____

31. To not be deceiving ourselves, we need to grow _____

_____, become _____, and yield _____

2. IDOLATRY AND THE FEAR OF GOD
by Charles G. Finney

"They feared the Lord, and served their own gods"--2 Kings 17:33

When the ten tribes of Israel were carried away by the king of Assyria, their land was repopulated with strangers of different idolatrous nations who knew nothing of the religion of the Jews. Very soon, the wild beasts increased in the country, and the lions destroyed multitudes of the people. They thought it was because they did not know the god of that country and had therefore ignorantly transgressed and offended him.

So they applied to the king, who told them to get one of the priests of the Israelites to teach them the manner of the god of the land. They took this advice and obtained one of the priests to come to Bethel and teach them the religious ceremonies and modes of worship that had been practiced

there. And he taught them to fear Jehovah as the god of that country. But still, they did not receive Him as the only God. They feared Him, that is, they feared His anger and His judgments; and to avert these they performed the prescribed rites.

But they served their own gods. They kept up their idolatrous worship, and this was what they loved and preferred, although they felt obliged to pay some reverence to Jehovah as a god of that country. Multitudes of persons still profess a certain kind of fear of the Lord who nevertheless serve their own gods--other things to which their hearts are supremely devoted and in which they mainly put their trust.

SERVING IN BONDAGE AND SELFISHNESS

There are two kinds of fear. There is the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom and is founded in love. There is also a slavish fear, which is a mere dread of evil and is purely selfish. This is the kind of fear that was possessed by those people spoken of in the text. They were afraid Jehovah would send His judgments upon them if they did not perform certain rites, and this was the motive they had for worshipping Him. Those who have this fear are supremely selfish and, while they profess to reverence Jehovah, have other gods whom they love and serve.

To serve a person is to be obedient to the will and devoted to the interests of that individual. To serve God is to make Christianity the main business of life and to devote one's self, heart, life, powers, time, influence and all to build up the Kingdom of God and advance His glory. Who are they who profess to fear the Lord but serve their own gods? Anyone who has not heartily and practically renounced the ownership of his possessions and given them up to the Lord.

Suppose a gentleman were to employ a clerk who continued to attend to his own business. When asked to do what is necessary for his employer, who pays him wages, he replied, "I really have so much business of my own that I have no time to do these things." Such a servant was not serving his employer at all. His time was paid for by another, but he served himself. Where a man has not renounced the ownership of himself, not only in thought but practically, he has not taken the first step in Christianity. He is not serving the Lord but serving his own gods.

The man who does not make his business a part of his Christianity does not serve God. Sometimes men say that they are engaged all day in business and don't have time to serve God. They think they serve God a little while in the morning and then attend to their worldly business. They are not serving God. It is a shame for them to pretend to serve God. They are willing to give God the time before breakfast or before they go to work, but as soon as that is over, away they go. They fear the Lord enough to pray morning and night, but they serve their own gods.

Their religion is the laughing stock of hell. While they pray devoutly, they serve themselves instead of engaging in business for God. No doubt the idols are well satisfied with the arrangement, but God is wholly displeased.

Many of you make religion consist in certain acts of piety that do not interfere with your selfishness. You pray in the morning with your family because you can do it then very conveniently. But don't interfere with the service of your own god or stand in the way of your getting rich and enjoying the world. The gods you serve make no complaint of being slighted or neglected for the service of Jehovah.

SUNDAY CHRISTIANS

Multitudes of people suppose that the week is man's time and the Sabbath is God's. They think they have a right to do their own work during the week and promote their own interests, if they will only serve God on Sunday.

A celebrated preacher, in illustrating the wickedness of breaking the Sabbath, used this illustration: "Suppose a man having seven dollars in his pocket should meet a beggar in great distress and give him six dollars, keeping only one for himself. And the beggar, seeing that he retained one dollar, should turn and rob him of that--would not every heart despise his baseness?" This illustration embodies the idea that it is ungrateful to break the Sabbath since God has given to men six days for their own and only reserved the Sabbath for Himself.

You that do this do not serve God at all. If you are selfish during the week, you are selfish altogether. To suppose you had any real piety would imply that you were converted every Sunday and unconverted every Monday. But is the Sabbath a day to serve God, exclusive of other

days? Is God in need of your services on Sunday to keep His work going?

God requires all your services as much on the six days as on the Sabbath! He has appropriated the Sabbath to peculiar duties and required its observance as a day of rest from toil, cares, and labors that concern the present world. But because God uses men to accomplish His purpose, and the gospel is to be spread and sustained by the things of this world, God requires you to work all the six days at your secular employments. It is all for His service as much as the worship of the Sabbath.

Sunday is no more given for the service of God than Monday. You have no more right to serve yourselves on Monday than you have on Sunday. If any of you have imagined that the six days of the week are your own time, it shows that you are supremely selfish. Do not consider that in prayer and on Sunday you are serving God if the rest of the time you are serving yourself. You have never known the radical principle of serving the Lord.

Anyone serving themselves or their own gods will make few sacrifices of personal ease and comfort. When a man enters into service, he gives up his ease and comfort for the interest of his employer. Is a man supremely devoted to the service of God when he shows that his own ease and comfort are dearer than the Kingdom of Jesus Christ? He would rather sacrifice the salvation of sinners than sit on a hard pew or be separated from his family for an hour or two!

Do you give your time and money to God's service grudgingly or by constraint? What would you think of your servant if you had to push him all the time to do anything for your interest?

Many people do everything grudgingly. If they do anything, it comes hard. If you go to one of these characters and want his time or money, it is difficult to get him interested. He does not consider the interests of Christ's Kingdom higher than his own. He may make a show of fearing the Lord, but he serves gods of his own.

HOLIDAY OR SACRIFICE?

Those who are aiming to elevate their own families into a different sphere by storing up wealth show that they have some other object to live for

than bringing this world under the authority of Jesus Christ. They have other gods to serve. They may pretend to fear the Lord, but they serve their own gods.

Many people profess to be the servants of God but are eagerly gathering property and planning to retire in the country. Has God given you a right to a perpetual Sabbath as soon as you have made a lot of money? Did God tell you, when you professed to enter His service, to work hard for so many years and then have a continual holiday? Did He promise to excuse you after that from making the most of your time and talents and let you live at ease the rest of your days? If your thoughts are set upon this, you are not serving God but your own selfishness and sloth.

You can find people who greatly love things that do them no good, and others even form artificial appetites for positively loathsome things. No arguments will prevail upon them to abandon their habits for the sake of doing good. Are such persons absorbed in the service of God? Certainly not. Will they sacrifice their lives for the Kingdom of God? Why, you cannot make them even give up bad habits to save a soul from death.

Selfishness reigns in such people. It show the astonishing strength of selfishness. You often see selfishness showing itself in little things. The true state of a man's mind stands out so strongly that it will not give place to those great interests for which he ought to be willing to lay down his life.

People who are most readily moved to action by appeals to their own selfish interests show that they are serving their own gods.

Suppose I want a man to build a church. How can I convince him? Must I show him how it will improve the value of his property, advance his business, or gratify his selfishness in some other way? If he is more excited by these motives than he is by a desire to save perishing souls and advance the Kingdom of Christ, he has never given himself to serve the Lord. He is still serving himself. He is more influenced by his selfish interests than by all those benevolent principles on which Christianity turns. The character of a true servant of God is opposite to this.

Many people are more excited by other subjects than the Lord. You find them talking about politics or philosophy, and if you bring up Christianity, the conversation immediately stops. They would rather talk about animal

feelings, showing that the Lord is not the subject that is nearest their hearts. A man is always most easily excited about that subject that lies nearest his heart. When you can talk early and late about the news and other worldly topics but cannot possibly be interested in the Lord, you know that your heart is not in it. If you pretend to be a servant of God, you are a hypocrite.

When a man is more jealous for his own fame than for God's glory, it show that he lives for himself and serves his own god. Who is his god, himself or the Lord? Imagine a minister thrown into a fever because somebody criticizes his scholarship or his dignity, while he is as cool as ice at all the indignities thrown upon the blessed God. Is that man a follower of Paul, willing to be considered a fool for the cause of Christ? If he understood Christ, he would rejoice to have his name cast out as evil for His cause.

CUSHIONED PEWS AND FOLDED HANDS

That which gives value to a Christian institution is the salvation of sinners and the sanctification of saints. The end for which Christ lives, and for which He has left His Church in the world, is to draw all men to Himself. This is the business to which God calls His servants. If any man is not doing this as the main object of his life, he is not serving the Lord but is serving his own gods.

People who seek for happiness in Christianity, rather than for usefulness, are serving their own gods. Their religion is entirely selfish. They want to enjoy religion and are always asking how they can be happy and pleasurably excited in religious exercises. They will only go to meetings that will make them happy, never asking whether that is the way to do the most good or not. They are content to do nothing but sit on their cushioned pews and have the minister feed them.

Instead of seeking how to do good, they are only seeking to be happy. Their daily prayer is not that of the converted Saul of Tarsus, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do" (acts 9:7) but, "Lord, tell me how I can be happy." Is that the Spirit of God? No. He said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Psalm 40:8). Is that the spirit of the apostle Paul? No. He threw off his upper garments at once and made his arms bare for the field of labor.

Those who make their own salvation their supreme object are serving their own gods. Many people in the Church show by their conduct and their language that their leading object is to secure their own salvation. Their grand determination is to get their own soul planted on the firm battlements of the heavenly Jerusalem and walk the golden fields of Canaan above. If the Bible is not in error, all such characters will go to hell. Their religion is pure selfishness. For "Whosoever will save his life shall loose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matthew 16:25)

Very little is accomplished in the world for Jesus Christ because so few do anything for Him. Jesus has few real servants in the world. How many people do you think there are in the Church that are really at work for God and striving to advance the Kingdom of Christ? The reason that Christianity advances no faster is that there are few to advance it and many to hinder it.

You see a crowd of people at a fire trying to get the goods out of a store. Some are determined to get the goods, but the rest are not doing anything. They divert their attention by talking about other things or hinder the workers by finding fault with their way of doing it. The Church is very similar. Those who are trying to do the work are greatly hindered by the backwardness, the objections, and the resistance of the rest.

Few Christians have the spirit of prayer. How can they have the spirit of prayer? And why should God give it to them? Suppose God gave a man engaged in his worldly scheme the spirit of prayer. Of course he would pray for things nearest his heart: his worldly schemes to serve his own gods. Will God give him the spirit of prayer for such purpose? Never!

WHERE DO YOU STAND?

Many professing Christians have not begun to serve the Lord at all. A man said to one of them, "Do you feel that your property and your business are all God's, and do you hold and manage them for God?" "Oh, no," he said, "I have not gone as far as that yet." Not got as far as that! That man had been professing Christianity for years and still did not consider all that he had as belonging to God! No doubt he was serving his own gods.

I insist that this is the very beginning of Christianity. What is conversion

but turning from the service of the world to the service of God? And yet this man had not discovered that he was God's servant. He seemed to think it would be a big step to feel that all he had was the Lord's.

You who are performing religious duties from selfish motives are in reality trying to make God your servant. If your own interests are supreme, all you services are performed to induce God to promote your interests. Why do you pray, go to church, or give money to Christian causes? You answer, "For the sake of promoting my own salvation." Indeed! Not to glorify God but to get to heaven!

Don't you think the devil would do the same if he thought he could gain his end by it--and be a devil still? The highest style of selfishness is to try to get God, with all His attributes, enlisted in the service of your mighty self!

Are you serving the Lord, or are you serving your own gods? How are you doing? Have you done anything for God? Have you been living as a servant of God? Is Satan's kingdom weakened by what you have done? Could you say now, "Come with me, and I will show you this sinner converted or that backslider reclaimed or this weak saint strengthened and aided?" Could you bring living witnesses of what you have done in the service of God?

Or would your answer be, "I have been to church every Sunday and heard a great deal of good preaching, and I have generally attended the prayer meetings. I have prayed with my family and read the Bible." And in all that, you have been merely passive. You have feared the Lord and served your own gods.

"Yes, but I have sold so many goods and made so much money, of which I intend to give a tenth to the missionary cause."

Be not deceived. If you loved souls and were striving to serve God, you would think of souls here and do the work of God here. What are we to think of a missionary going to another country who has never said a word to a sinner at home? Does he love souls? The man that will do nothing at home is not fit to go to the mission field. And he that pretends to be saving money for missions while he will not try to save sinners here is an outrageous hypocrite.

IDOLATRY AND THE FEAR OF GOD

1. Why did the strangers in Israel think the lions were destroying the people? _____

.

2. The strangers feared God's _____

and His _____, but they served _____ .

3. Multitudes profess a kind of _____

who nevertheless _____

4. "Their own gods" refer to other things _____

5. There is the fear which is _____
.

6. What is it to serve a person _____

7. To serve God is to _____

8. Today, who are they who profess to fear God, but serve their own gods? _____

.

9. Where a man has not renounced _____

_____, not only _____, he has not _____ .

10. Many make religion consist in _____ that _____ .

11. What incorrect idea does the illustration of the beggar teach? (p. 107) _____ .

12. If you are _____, you are _____

_____ altogether.

13. Is our secular work as much for His service as it is for ours? _____ .

14. Sunday is no more _____ .

15. If anyone has imagined that the six days of the week are his own time, it shows _____ .

16. A selfish man would rather sacrifice _____ than sit _____ .

17. Those who aim to elevate their families by storing up wealth show they have _____

.

18. We can pretend to serve the Lord, but _____ .

19. What shows the astonishing strength of selfishness? _____

20. People are most readily moved _____

show they are _____

21. The character of a true servant of God is opposite to what? _____

.

22. A man is always most easily _____

23. When a man is more jealous for his own reputation than for _____

it shows _____

.

24. The end for which Christ lives, and for _____

is to _____

25. What gives value to a Christian institution? _____ .

26. What is a man to do as the main object of his life? _____ .

27. We serve our own gods when we seek for

rather than

28. Many people in the church show by

that their leading object

.

29. Why is very little accomplished in the world for Jesus? _____ .

30. Why does not Christianity advance faster? _____

31. Why does God not give someone the spirit of prayer? _____

32. What is conversion but

.

33. You who are performing religious duties from selfish motives are _____

34. If your own interests are supreme, all

35. What is the HIGHEST style of selfishness? _____

36. Who is an outrageous hypocrite?

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3. DOUBTFUL ACTIONS ARE SINFUL
by Charles G. Finney

"He that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" --Romans 14:23.

It was a custom among the idolatrous heathen to offer the bodies of beasts in sacrifice. A part of every beast that was offered belonged to the priest. The priests used to sell their portion at the market as any other meat. The scattered Christian Jews were particular about what meats they ate. They wouldn't run the least danger of violating the Mosaic law, and they raised doubts and created disputes and difficulties among the churches because of their belief. This was one of the subjects that divided the church of Corinth, until they finally wrote to the apostle Paul for directions.

A part of the first epistle to the Corinthians was doubtless written as a reply to such inquiries. Some carried their scruples so far that they thought it improper to eat any meat, for they were continually in danger of buying meat that was offered to idols. Others thought it made no difference. They had a right to eat meat, and they would but it in the market as they found it.

To quell the dispute, they wrote to Paul. In the eighth chapter, he discusses the subject in full. "Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him. As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled" (1 Corinthians 8:1-7).

The believer's conscience "is defiled"--that is, he regards it as meat

offered to an idol, and he is really practicing idolatry. The eating of meat is a matter of total indifference, in itself.

"But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, is we eat not, are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" (1 Corinthians 8:8-11).

Some Christian's might know that an idol is nothing and cannot make any change in the meat itself. Yet if they should be seen eating meat that was known to have been offered to an idol, those who are weak might be encouraged to eat the sacrifices as such or as an act of worship to the idol. And the whole time they think they are only following the example of their more enlightened brethren.

"But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend" (1 Corinthians 8:12-13).

This is Paul's benevolent conclusion. He would rather forego eating meat altogether than be the occasion of drawing a weak brother into idolatry. For, in fact, to sin so against a weak brother is to sin against Christ.

UNDERSTAND YOUR MOTIVES

In writing to the Romans, Paul takes up the same subject--the same dispute had existed there. After laying down some general principles, he gives this rule: "Him that is weak in faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs" (Romans 14:1-2).

Among the Romans, some chose to live entirely on vegetables rather than run the risk of buying flesh that had been offered to idols. Others are as usual, asking no questions for conscience' sake. Those who lived on vegetables charges the others with idolatry. Those who ate flesh accused the others of superstition and weakness. This was wrong.

"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not, judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who are thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Romans 14:3-4).

A controversy also arose about observing the Jewish festival days and holy days. Some supposed that God required this, and therefore they observed them. The others neglected them because they supposed God did not require the observance.

"One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and not man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For as it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" (Romans 14:5-13).

Now mark what Paul says:

"But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably: Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Romans 14:15)

The distinction of meats into clean and unclean is not binding under Christ. But to him that believes in the distinction, it is a crime to eat indiscriminately because he does what he believes to be contrary to the commands of God. "All things indeed are pure; but it is evil to him that eateth with offense" (Romans 14:20). Every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind that what he is doing is right. If a man ate

unclean meat, not being clear in his mind that it was right, he offended God.

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Romans 14:21-23).

The word rendered damned means condemned, or judged guilty of breaking the law of God. If a man doubts whether it is lawful to do a thing, and while in that state of doubt he does it, he displeases God, breaks the law, and is condemned whether the thing is right or wrong. I have been careful to explain the text in its context because I want to satisfy your minds of the correctness of the principle.

If a man does what he doubts to be lawful, he sins and is condemned for it in the sight of God. Whether it is lawful itself is not the question. If he doubts its lawfulness, it is wrong in him.

One exception ought to be noted here. If a man honestly and fully doubts the lawfulness of omitting to do something as much as he does the lawfulness of doing it, he must act according to the best light he can get. But where he doubts the lawfulness of the act and has no cause to doubt the lawfulness of the omission, yet does it, he sins and is condemned before God.

RESPONSIBILITY AND ACTION

An individual is condemned if he does what he doubts because if God makes him doubt the lawfulness of an act, he is bound to stop, examine the question, and settle it to his satisfaction.

Suppose your child is invited by his companions to go somewhere, and he doubts whether you would let him go. Do you not see that it is his duty to ask you? If one of his schoolmates invites him home, and he doubts whether you would like it, yet he goes, is this not wrong?

Or suppose a castaway on a desolate island takes up his abode in a cave, considering himself alone and destitute of friends, relief, and hope. But every morning he finds a supply of nutritious and wholesome food

prepared for him by the mouth of his cave. What is his duty? Does not gratitude require him to find his unseen friend and thank him for his kindness? He cannot say, "I doubt whether anyone is here; therefore, I will do nothing but eat my allowance and relax." His refusal to search for his benefactor would convict him of wickedness, as if he knew who it was and refused to return thanks for favors received.

Or imagine an atheist opens his eyes on the blessed light of heaven and breathes air that sends health and vigor through his frame. Such a vision is enough evidence to set him on the search for that great Being who provides all these means of life and happiness. If he does not seek after God, he shows that he has the heart as well as the intellect of an atheist. He has, to say the least, evidence that there may be a God. What then is his business? Plainly, it is to honestly, with a childlike spirit, search the Scriptures and pay God reverence. If he still acts as if there were no God, he shows that his heart is wrong; it says, "Let there be no God."

It is the same with the Unitarian. He is bound to search the Scriptures humbly and satisfy himself. No intelligent and honest man can say that the Scriptures afford no evidence of the divinity of Christ. They do afford evidence that has convinced and fully satisfied thousands of the most acute minds, who have been before opposed to the doctrine. No man can reject the doctrine, with a doubt, because there is evidence that is may be true.

Let us also consider the Universalist. Where is one who can say he knows there is not a hell where sinners go after death into endless torment. He is bound to search the Scriptures. It is not enough for him to say he does not believe in hell. There may be one, and if he rejects it and goes on reckless of the truth whether there is or not, that itself makes him a rebel against God. He doesn't know whether there is a hell which he ought to avoid, yet he acts as if he was certain and had no doubts. He is condemned.

I once knew a physician who was a Universalist. He has entered eternity to try the reality of his speculations. Before he died, he told me that he had strong doubts of the truth of Universalism. He had mentioned his doubts to his minister, who confessed that he, too, doubted its truth; and he did not believe there was a Universalist in the world who did not doubt.

For a man to do a thing when he doubts whether it is lawful show that he is selfish and has other objects besides doing the will of God. It shows that he wants to do it to gratify himself. He doubts whether God will approve of it, yet he does it. Is he not a rebel? If he honestly wished to serve God, he would stop, inquire, and examine until he was satisfied. But to go forward while he is in doubt shows that he is selfish and wicked. He is willing to do it whether God is pleased or not, and he wants to do it whether it is right or wrong. He does it because he wants to do it and not because it is right.

The man who ignores his doubts manifests a reckless spirit. This shows a lack of conscience, an indifference to right, a setting aside of the authority of God, and a disposition not to do God's will. He does not care whether God is pleased or displeased, and desperate recklessness and headlong temper is the height of wickedness.

The principle, then, which is clearly laid down in the text and context, and also in the chapter which I quoted from Corinthians, is fully sustained by examination. For a man to do a thing, when he doubts the lawfulness of it, is sin for which he is condemned before God.

LEGITIMATE DOUBTS

In some cases, a person may be equally in doubt about the lawfulness of a thing and whether he is bound to do it or not.

Take the subject of wine at the communion table. Some strongly believe that wine is an essential part of the ordinance and that we ought to use the best wine we can get. Others say that we ought not to use alcoholic or intoxicating wine at all. As wine is not in their view essential to the ordinance, they think it is better to use some other drink. Both these classes are undoubtedly equally conscientious and desirous to do what they have most reason to believe is agreeable to the will of God.

Each man must decide, according to the best light he can get, what is most pleasing to God. He must pray over the matter, search the Scriptures, obtain the best understanding he can, and then act. When he does this, he is by no means to be judged or censured by others for the course he takes. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?" No man is authorized to make his own conscience the rule of his neighbor's conduct.

In these cases the design is to honor God, and the sole ground of doubt is which course will really honor Him. Paul says, in reference to all laws of this kind, "He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." The design is to do right, and the doubt is as to the means of doing it in the best manner.

EXAMINING SELFISH DESIRES

In some cases the design is wrong. The object is to gratify self, and the individual has doubts whether he may do it lawfully.

Take, for instance, the making or vending of strong alcoholic drinks. After all the light has been thrown upon the question, is there a man living in this land who can say he sees no reason to doubt the lawfulness of this business. But take the most charitable supposition possible for the distiller or the vender, and suppose he is not fully convinced of its unlawfulness. He must at least doubt its lawfulness.

What is he to do then? Is he to shut his eyes to the light , regardless of truth as long as he can keep from seeing it? No. He may raise objections, but he knows that he has doubts about the lawfulness of his business. And if he doubts and persists in doing it without taking the trouble to examine and see what is right, he is just as sure to be damned as if he went on in the face of knowledge.

Men say, "Why, I don't know that the Bible forbids making or selling liquor." Well, suppose you are not fully convinced, and all your possible and conceivable objections are not removed--what then? You know you have doubts about its lawfulness. It is not necessary to take such ground to convict you of doing wrong. If you doubt its lawfulness, yet persist in doing it, you are on the way to hell.

The same remarks apply to all sorts of lottery and casino gambling. Men have doubts.

Take the case of controversial indulgences of appetite. Consider the drinking of wine, beer, and other fermented intoxicating liquors. Is it not questionable, at least, whether using these drinks is not transgressing the rule laid down by the apostle: "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, not any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak"? No man can make me believe he has no doubts of the

lawfulness of doing it. No certain proof exists of its lawfulness, but there is strong proof of its unlawfulness. Every man who does it while he doubts is condemned.

Can any man pretend that he has no doubt about the will of God for him to use tobacco? No man can pretend that he doubts the lawfulness of his omission of these things. Does any man think that he is bound to make use of wine, strong beer, or tobacco as a luxury? No. The doubt is all on one side. What shall we say, then, of that man who doubts the lawfulness of it and still fills his face with the poisonous weed? He is condemned.

Consider parties where they eat and drink to excess. Is there no reason to doubt whether this is a practical use of time and money as God requires? Look at the starving and the poor, consider the effect of this extravagance, and see if you will ever go to another such party, or have one, without doubting its lawfulness. Where can you find a man or woman who will say they have no doubt? And if you doubt, and still do it, you are condemned.

This principle touches a whole class of controversial things where people attempt to excuse themselves by saying it is not worse than to do this or that. Thus, they get away from the condemning sentence of God's law. But, in fact, if there is a doubt, it is their duty to abstain.

Take the case of dances, novel reading, and other methods of wasting time. Is this God's way to spend your lives? Can you say you have no doubt of it?

People say we should have holidays. This is very well, But when they are abused and produce so much evil, I ask every Christian if you can help doubting their lawfulness? And if it is doubtful, it comes under the rule: "If meat makes by brother to offend." If keeping holidays leads to gluttony, drunkenness, and wickedness, does it not bring the lawfulness of them into doubt? Yes, that is the least that can be said, and they who doubt yet do it sin against God.

Intermarriages of Christians with impenitent sinners must also be considered. This answer always comes up: "But it is not certain that these marriages are unlawful." Does not the Bible and the nature of the case make it doubtful whether they are right? It can be demonstrated, indeed, to be unlawful. But suppose it could not be. What Christian ever

married an unbeliever and did not doubt whether it was lawful? He that doubts is condemned.

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT

This principle will stand by you when you attempt to rebuke sin and the power of society attempts to put you on the defensive to prove the sinfulness of a cherished practice. Remember, the burden of proof does not lie on you. If you can show sufficient reason to question its lawfulness and create a valid doubt whether it is according to the will of God, you shift the burden of proof to the other side. Unless they can remove the doubt and show that there is no room for doubt, they have no right to continue. If they do, they sin against God.

The knowledge of duty is not indispensable to moral obligation, but the possession of the means of knowledge is sufficient to make a person responsible. If a man has the means of knowing whether something is right or wrong, he is bound to use the means, inquire, and get the facts.

If men who do what they doubt the lawfulness of are condemned, what will we say of the multitudes who continually do what they know and confess to be wrong? Woe to that man who practices what he condemns. And "happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."

Hypocrites often attempt to shelter themselves behind their doubts to get clear of their duty. The hypocrite is unwilling to be enlightened and doesn't want to know the truth. He doesn't want to obey the Lord, and he hides behind his doubts and turns his eye from the light. But God will drag him out from behind this refuge of lies by the principle laid down in the text--their very doubts condemn them.

It is obvious that very little conscience exists in the Church. Multitudes continue to strongly doubt the lawfulness of many of their actions.

And less love to God exists than conscience. It cannot be pretended that love to God is the cause of all this following of fashions, practicing indulgences, and other things of which people doubt the lawfulness. They do not persist in these things because they love God. They persist because they wish to gratify themselves, and they would rather run the risk of doing wrong than to have their doubts cleared up.

Do not say in your prayers, "O Lord, if I have sinned in this thing, forgive me the sin." If you have done what you believed was wrong, you have sinned, whether the thing itself is right or wrong. You must repent and ask forgiveness.

Are you convinced that to do what you doubt the lawfulness of is sin? If you are, I have one more question to ask you. Will you from this time relinquish everything of which you doubt the lawfulness--every amusement, indulgence, practice, and pursuit? Or will you stand condemned before the solemn judgment seat of Jesus Christ? If you will not relinquish these things, you show that you are an impenitent sinner and do not intend to obey God. If you do not repent, you bring God's condemnation and wrath down upon your head forever.

4. THE CHALLENGE OF LOVE
by Charles G. Finney

"Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him"--Leviticus 19:17.

Men are bound to reprove their neighbors for sin, or they become partakers or accessories to their sin. If we really love God, we will feel bound to reprove those who hate and abuse Him and break His commands.

If I love the government of the country, won't I reprove and rebuke a man who abuses or reviles it? If a child loves his parents, won't he reprove a man that abuses his parents?

If a man loves the universe and is motivated by love, he knows that sin is inconsistent with the highest good of the universe. If not counteracted, sin injures and ruins, and its direct tendency is to overthrow the order and destroy the happiness of the universe. Therefore, if a Christian sees this happening, his benevolence will lead him to reprove and oppose sin.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

Love for the particular people with whom you are connected should lead you to reprove sin. Sin is a reproach to any people, and the man who commits it produces a society harmful to everything good. His example

has a tendency to corrupt society, destroy its peace, and introduce disorder and ruin. The duty of everyone who loves the community is to resist and reprove sin.

Love for your neighbor demands it. Neighbor, here, means anybody who sins within the reach of your influence--not only in your presence but in your neighborhood, your nation, or the world. If he sins, he injures himself, and if you love him, you will reprove his sins.

Love for the sinner prompts us to warn him of the consequences of his actions. Suppose we say our neighbor's house on fire. True love would induce us to warn him so he wouldn't perish in the flames. If we see him stay in the burning house, we would plead with him not to destroy himself. Much more should we warn him of the consequences of sin and strive to turn him to God before he destroys himself.

If you see your neighbor sin and neglect to reprove him, it is just as cruel as if you see his house on fire and passed by without warning him. If he was in the house and the house burned, he would lose his life. If he sins, and remains in sin, he will go to hell. Isn't it cruel to let him go unwarned to hell?

Some people seem to consider it not cruel to let a neighbor continue in sin until the wrath of God comes on him. Their feelings are so "tender" that they cannot wound him by telling him of his sin and danger. No doubt, the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Instead of warning their neighbor of the consequences of sin, they actually encourage him in it.

For anyone to see rebellion and not lift his hand to oppose it is itself rebellion. It would be counted rebellion by the laws of the land. The man who knows of a treasonable plot and doesn't expose it or try to defeat it is an accessory, condemned by law. If a man sees a rebellion breaking out against God and doesn't oppose it or make efforts to suppress it, he is himself a rebel. God holds us accountable for the death of those whom we allow to continue in sin without reproof, and it is right that He should. If we see them sin, make no opposition, and give no reproof, we consent to it and encourage them in it. If you see a man about to kill his neighbor and do nothing to prevent it, you consent and are an accessory--in the eye of God and in the eye of the law, you are guilty of the same sin.

Likewise, if you see a man committing iniquity and do nothing to resist it, you are guilty with him. His blood will be upon his own head, but at whose hand will God require it? What does God say respecting a watchman? "Son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezekiel 33:7-8).

This is true of all men. If you allow a neighbor who is within reach of your influence to sin unwarned, he will die in his iniquity, but his blood will be required at your hand.

If you keep silent, your silence encourages him in sin. He infers from your silence that you approve of his sin or, at least, that you don't care about it--especially if he knows you profess Christianity. Silence is consent. Sinners do regard your silence as approval for what they do.

ARROWS OF LIGHT

How many multitudes have been reformed by timely reproof? Most of those who are saved are saved by somebody's rebuking them for sin and urging them to repentance. You may be instrumental in saving any man, if you speak to him, reprove him, and pray for him. A single reproof has often been to the transgressor like the barbed arrow in his soul that festered until its sweet poison drank up his spirits and he submitted to God. I have known instances where even a look of reproof has done the work.

Cases have often occurred where the transgressor has not been reclaimed, but others have been deterred from following his example by the rebukes directed to him. If believers were faithful, men would fear their reproofs, and that fear would deter them from such conduct. Multitudes who now go on unblushing and unawed would pause, think, and be reclaimed and saved! Will you, with such an argument for faithfulness before you, let sinners go on unrebuked until they stumble into hell?

The language in the text is exceedingly strong. "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke him"--that is, without any excuse--"and not suffer sin upon him"--

not be accessory to his ruin. The word is a Hebrew superlative, which leaves no doubt or excuse for not doing it. No stronger command of God exists in the Bible than this. God has given it the greatest strength of language that He can.

A man does not live conscientiously toward God or man unless he is in the habit of reproving transgressors within his influence. This is one reason why there is so little conscience in the Church. This verse from Leviticus is one of the strongest commands in the Bible, yet most Christians don't pay any attention to it. Can they have a clear conscience? They may as well pretend to have a clear conscience and get drunk every day.

No man keeps the law of God or keeps his conscience clear who sees sin and does not reprove it. He who knows of sin and does not reprove it breaks two commandments: first, he becomes an accessory to the transgression of his neighbor; second, he disobeys by refusing to reprove his neighbor.

Would you be prepared to meet your children at the judgment if you had not reproved, chastised, or watched over them? "Certainly not," you would say. But why? "Because God has made it my duty to do this, and He holds me responsible for it." Then take the case of any other man that sins under your eye or within reach of your influence. If he goes down to hell, and you have never reproved him, aren't you responsible? How many souls are now groaning in hell that you have seen commit sin and have never reproved? New they are pouring curses on your head because you never warned them. How can you meet them on the day of judgment?

How many profess to love God but never even pretend to obey His commands? Are such people prepared to meet God? When He says, "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor," He means there is no excuse.

This command is addressed to all men who have neighbors. It was directed to the people of Israel, and through them it is addressed to all who are under the government of God--to high and low, rich and poor, young and old, male and female, and every individual bound to obey His commands.

PRECIOUS PEARLS AND SWINE

He who made the law has a right to make exceptions. Some exceptions to this rule are laid down in the Bible.

God says, "Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee" (Proverbs 9:8). If a person is known to be a scorner--a despiser of religion and a hater of God--and has no regard to the Lord's law, why should you reprove him? It will only provoke a quarrel without any good resulting to anybody. Therefore, God makes such a character an exception to the rule.

Jesus Christ says, "Neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matthew 7:6). Whatever else this passage means, it means that sometimes men are in such a state of mind that to talk to them about the Lord would be at once irrational and dangerous, like casting pearls before swine. They have such a contempt for Christianity and such a stupid, sensual, and swinish heart that they will trample all your reproofs under their feet and turn on you in anger. Leave such men alone. Not meddling with them will be greater wisdom than to attack them. But great love and discernment must be used not to suppose those of your neighbors to be swine who do not deserve it and might be helped by reproof.

Jesus said of the scribes and Pharisees, "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind" (Matthew 15:14). They were full of pride and conceit, satisfied with their own wisdom and goodness, and could not be reached by any reproof. If you begin to reprove them, they will put you down. These men are so full of arguments, cavils, and bullyings that you gain nothing.

When you reprove your neighbor for sin, make him feel that it is not a personal controversy with you or a matter of selfishness on your part. Don't claim any right of superiority over him, but reprove him in the name of the Lord, for the honor of God. If you in any way give the impression that it is a personal controversy, done for any private motive with you, he will invariably rise against you and resist. But if you impress that it is done in the name of God and bring him before God as an offender, he will find it difficult to get away from you without at least confessing that he is wrong.

Above all things, don't make him think it is a little thing that you hint to

him. Instead, make him realize he has sinned against God and that it ought to be looked on as a terrible offense. However, you should use more or less severity according to the nature of the case and the circumstances under which the sin was committed.

USING WISDOM IN REPROOF

Your relationship to the person who is guilty of sin should be properly regarded. If a child is going to reprove a parent, he should do it in a manner suited to the relationship. If a man is going to reprove a magistrate or an elder, the apostle says it must be in that way--"treat him as a father" (1 Timothy 5:1).

Relationship should enter deeply into the manner of administering reproof. Parents, children, husbands, wives, brothers, and sisters should all be regarded. The ages of the parties and their relative circumstances in life must be considered. For servants to reprove their masters in the same manner as their equals is improper.

This direction should never be overlooked or forgotten, for if it is, the good effect of reproof will be lost. But remember that relative circumstances of the parties do not take away the obligation of this duty. You are to reprove sin and are bound to do it in the name of the Lord. Do it not as if you were complaining or finding fault for a personal injury committed against yourself but as a sin against God. Thus, when a child reproves a parent, he is not to do it as if he was discussing an injury done to himself but because the parent has sinned against God.

If the individual is ignorant, reproof should be in the form of instruction rather than of severe rebuke. How do you treat your little child? You instruct him and strive to enlighten his mind respecting his duty. You proceed, of course, very differently than you would with a hardened offender.

You would reprove a first offender in a different manner than you would use toward a habitual transgressor. If a person is accustomed to sin and knows it is wrong, you use more severity. The first time a mere mention of it may be enough to prevent a repetition.

If he has not only often committed the sin but been often reproved, there is necessity for using sharpness. The hardening influence shows that no common rebuke will take hold. He needs to have the terrors of the Lord

poured upon him like a storm of hail.

Never show any displeasure at the transgressor that he can possibly turn into personal displeasure at himself. Only show your strong displeasure at what he is doing. Otherwise, he will think you are not in earnest. Suppose you reprove a man for murder in a manner not expressing any abhorrence of his crime. You would not expect to produce any change. The manner should be suited to the nature of the crime; just don't let him think you have any personal feeling. This is the fault in the manner of reproving crime, both in the pulpit and out of it: for fear of giving offence, men don't express their hatred of the sin. Therefore, transgressors are seldom reclaimed.

You should always have so much of the Holy Spirit with you that when you reprove a man for sin he feels it comes from God. I have known cases where reproof from a Christian cut the transgressor to the heart and stung like the arrow of the Almighty, and he couldn't get rid of it until he repented.

Sometimes reproof is best done by sending a letter, especially if the person is at a distance. And there are times where it can be done even in your own neighborhood.

I knew an individual who chose this way of reprimanding a sea captain for drunkenness. The captain drank hard, especially in bad weather, when his services were very important. He was not only a drunk, but when he drank, he was ill-natured and endangered the lives of all on board. The Christian was concerned and made it a subject of prayer.

This was a difficult case--he did not know how to approach the captain. A sea captain is a perfect despot and has the most absolute power on earth. He sat down, wrote a letter, and handed it to the captain. He plainly and affectionately, but faithfully and pointedly, set forth the sin the captain was committing against God and man. He accompanied it with much prayer to God. The captain read it, and it completely changed his ways. He apologized to the individual and never drank another drop of anything stronger than coffee or tea the whole trip.

It may be very essential to reprove sin in many cases where there is no chance that the individual will be benefited. For example, you must act in cases where your silence would be taken for approval of his sin or where

the very fact of his being reproved may prevent others from falling into the same sin. Where the offender comes properly under the description of a scorner or a swine, there God has made an exception, and you are not bound to reprove. But in other cases, the duty is yours and the consequences are God's.

People ask, "Should I reprove strangers?" Why not? Isn't the stranger your neighbor? You are not to reprove a stranger in the same way that you would a familiar acquaintance, but because he is a stranger is no reason why he should not be reproved. If a man swears profanely in your presence, his being a stranger does not excuse you from the responsibility of administering reproof or trying to bring him to repentance and save his soul.

PULLING SINNERS FROM THE FIRE

Don't talk about people's sins, go and rebuke them. Christians often talk about people's sins behind their backs, and this is great wickedness. If you want to talk about a person's sins, go and talk to him about them, and try to get him to repent and forsake them. Don't talk to others behind his back and leave him bound for hell.

Few Christians are sufficiently conscientious to practice this duty. Thousands never think of doing it. They live in habitual disobedience to this plain but strongly-expressed command of God. Then they wonder why they don't' have the spirit of prayer and why there aren't more revivals! How can they enjoy Christianity? What would the universe think of God if He granted the joys of religion to such unfaithful believers?

People have more regard for their own reputation than to the requirements of God. Rather than run the risk of being called judgmental or of creating enemies by rebuking sin, they let men remain unrebuked. It show they have greater fear of men than of God. For fear of offending men, they run the risk of offending God. They absolutely disobey God in one of His plainest and strongest commandments rather than incur the displeasure of men by rebuking their sins.

No man has a right to say, when we reprove him for his sin, that it's none of our business. Often transgressors tell faithful reprovers they had better mind their won business and not meddle with what doesn't concern them. God forbid that we should be silent. He has commanded us to rebuke our

neighbor in any wise regardless of the consequences. And we will rebuke them, though all hell should rise up against us.

If a man professes to love God, he ought to have consistency enough to reprove those that oppose God. If Christians were consistent in this duty, many would be converted by it. A right public sentiment would be formed, and sin would be rebuked and forced to retire before the majesty of Christ. If Christians were not such cowards, absolutely disobedient to the plain command of God, one thing would certainly come of it--either they would be murdered in the streets as martyrs because men could not bear the intolerable presence of truth, or men would be converted.

What should we say, then, to such professing Christians? Are you afraid to reprove sinners? When God commands, are you prepared to obey? How will you answer to God?

Will you practice this duty? Will you reprove sin faithfully and not bear it for your neighbors? Will you make your whole life a testimony against sin? Or will you hold your peace and be weighed down with the guilt of all transgressors around you and within your sphere of influence? God says, "Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him." Think about it.

THE CHALLENGE OF LOVE

1. Men are bound to _____ their neighbors for sin, or they become _____

or accessories to their sin.

2. If a man loves the universe and is motivated by love, he knows that _____

is _____ with the _____ of the universe.

3. _____ for the particular people with whom you are _____should lead you to reprove sin.

4. Love for your _____ demands it.

5. Love for the _____ prompts us to _____ of the _____

of his actions.

6. If you see your neighbor sin and _____ to reprove him, it is just as _____

as if you saw his house on fire, and _____ by _____ warning him.

7. Seeing rebellion and not _____ a _____

to oppose it is itself _____.

8. If you see a man about to _____ his neighbor and do_____ prevent it, you _____

and are an accessory.

9. Silence is _____. Sinners do regard it as _____ for what they do.

10. No man keeps the _____ of _____ or keeps his _____ clear

who sees sin and does not reprove it.

11. When God says "thou shalt in any wise _____ thy neighbor,"

He means there is _____.

12. This command is addressed to all men who _____.

13. Some _____ to this rule are:

A. "Reprove not a _____"

B. Some men are in such a "swinish" state of _____ that to talk to them about the Lord
would be at once _____ and _____. Leave such men _____

C. Leave alone those full of _____ and _____,

satisfied with their own _____ and _____..

They cannot be _____ by any _____.

14. When reproving your neighbor, claim no right of _____ over him, but reprove

him in the _____ of the _____, and for the _____ of God.

15. When will the sinner invariably rise against you and resist? _____

16. _____ should enter deeply in the _____ of administering reproof.

17. The _____ of the parties and their _____ must be considered.

18. Remember, the _____ of the parties DO NOT take away the obligation of this duty.

19. If the individual is _____, reproof should be in the form of _____

_____ rather than of severe _____.

20. Do you reprove a first offender different in manner than a habitual transgressor? _____

21. _____ show displeasure at the transgressor that he can possibly turn into _____ at himself.

Only show your strong displeasure at what he _____.

22. Always have so much of the _____ with you that when you reprove a man for sin,

he _____ it comes from _____.

23. Should one reprove a stranger? _____ In the same way as a familiar acquaintance? _____

24. Don't _____ people's _____, go and

_____ them.

25. Leaving men _____ shows they have a _____ greater _____ than of God.

26. Many refuse to run the risk of being called _____ or of _____.

27. If Christians were not such _____, absolutely _____

to the plain _____ of God, one thing is certain -- either they would be _____
in the _____ as _____ because men could not bear the _____

of _____, or men would be _____.

5. TRUE SAINTS
by Charles G. Finney

"Who is on the Lord's side?" --Exodus 32:26.

People try to serve God for many different reasons. Some serve from true love and some from other motives. They all profess to be servants of God. Yet instead of their being God's servants, they are trying to make God their servant. Their leading aim and object is to secure their own salvation or some other advantage for themselves through God's favor. They want to make God their friend so they can use Him to serve their own needs.

One class of professed Christians, however, are the true friends of God and man. If you observe the true design and aim of their faith, you will see that they are sincerely benevolent. That this is their character is obvious by their carefulness in avoiding sin. They hate it in themselves, and they hate it in others. They will not justify it in themselves, and they will not justify it in others. True Christians won't try to cover up or excuse their own sins, neither will they try to cover up or excuse the sins of others. In short, they aim at perfect holiness.

This conduct makes it evident that they are the true friends of God. I don't mean to say that every true friend of God is perfect, no more than I would say that every truly affectionate and obedient child is perfect or never fails his parent. But if he is an affectionate and obedient child, his aim is always to obey. If he fails in any respect, he by no means justifies it, pleads for it, or aims to cover it up; but as soon as he comes to think of the matter, he is dissatisfied with himself and repents.

FOR THE LOVE OF GOD

The true friends of God and man are always ready to humble, blame, or condemn themselves for what is wrong. But you never see them finding fault with God. You never hear them excusing themselves and throwing the blame on their Maker by telling of their inability to obey God. They always speak as if they felt that what God has required is right and reasonable with only themselves to blame for their disobedience. God does not require impossibilities of His creatures.

Christians manifest a deep abhorrence of the sins of other people. They do not cover up the sins of others or plead for them and excuse them. You never hear them apologizing for sin. As they are indignant at sin in themselves, they are just as much so when they see it in others. They know its horrible nature and abhor it always.

God's friends manifest this spirit in zeal for His honor and glory. They show the same ardor to promote God's honor and interest that the true patriot does to promote the honor and interest of his country. If he greatly loves his country, its government, and its interest, he sets his heart to promote it. He is never as happy as when he is doing something for his country.

A child who truly loves his father is never as happy as when he is advancing his father's honor and interest. He never feel more indignant grief than when he sees his father abused or injured. If he sees his father disobeyed or abused by those who ought to obey, love, and honor him, his heart breaks.

Multitudes of professing Christians are zealous to defend their own character and honor. But true saints feel more engaged, and their hearts beat higher, when defending or advancing God's honor. These are the true friends of God and man.

They sympathize with God in His feelings toward man and have the same love for souls that God feels. I do not mean that they feel in the same degree but that they have the same kind of feelings. There is such a thing as loving the souls of men but hating their conduct. You always naturally feel sympathy for a person in distress, unless you have some selfish reason for feeling malevolent. If you see a murderer hung, you would feel compassion for him. Even the wicked have this natural sympathy for those who suffer.

The real child of God feels and manifests another peculiar kind of sympathy toward sinners--a mingled feeling of abhorrence, compassion, and indignation against his sins and pity for his person.

Two kinds of love exist. One is the love of benevolence. This has no respect to the character of the person loved but merely views the individual as exposed to suffering and misery. God feel this way toward all men. The other kind, the love of complacency, includes esteem or approval of character. God feel this way only toward the righteous. He never feel this love toward sinners. He infinitely abhors them. He has compassion and abhorrence at the same time.

Christians have the same feelings but no to the same degree. They probably never feel right unless they have both these feelings at the same time. The Christian does not feel as God feels toward individuals unless both these feelings exist in his mind at the same time. You see this by one striking characteristic: the Christian will rebuke most pointedly and frequently those for whom he feels the deepest compassion. Did you ever see this? Did you ever see a parent yearing with compassion over a child and reprove him with tears but with a severity that would make the little offender shake under his rebuke?

Jesus often strongly manifested these two emotions. He wept over Jerusalem, yet He tells the reason in a manner that shows His burning indignation against their conduct: "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent to thee" (Matthew 23:37). What a full view He had of their wickedness as He wept with compassion for the doom that hung over them. Similarly, a Christians's most tender appeals are accompanied with a strong rebuke for sin.

RECONCILIATION: A ROYAL COMMANDMENT

The true friend of God and man never takes the sinner's part because he never acts through mere compassion. At the same time, he is never seen to denounce the sinner without manifesting compassion for his soul and a strong desire to save him from death.

His main objective is to promote Christianity and to lead everybody to glorify God. He does this naturally if he is the true friend of God. A true friend of the government wants everybody to obey the government. A true and affectionate child wants everybody to love and respect his father. If anyone is at odds, his constant aim and effort is to bring him to reconciliation. A true friend of God makes it a primary objective of his life to reconcile sinners to God.

If the leading feature of your character is not the absorbing thought and effort to reconcile men to God, you have not the root of the matter in you. Whatever appearance of religion you may have, you lack the leading and fundamental characteristic of true piety--the character and aims of Jesus and His disciples. Look at them and see how this feature stands out, in strong and eternal relief, as the leading characteristic, the prominent design, and the objective of their lives.

What is the leading objective of your life? Is it to bring all God's enemies to submit to Him? If not, away with your pretensions. Whatever else you have, you don't have the true love of God in you.

True Christians always want to avoid everything calculated to prevent or hinder the salvation of souls. They never ask, "Is this something God forbids?" The first question that naturally suggests itself to their minds is, "How will this affect the Kingdom? Will it prevent the conversion of sinners or hinder the progress of revivals?" If so, they don't need the thunder of Sinai to be pealed in their ears to forbid it. If they see it contrary to the spirit of holiness and to their main objective, that is enough.

Take gambling, for instance. Christians don't say, "Gambling is nowhere prohibited in the Bible, and I don't feel bound to give it up." They find that it hinders the great objective for which they live, and that is enough for them.

The friends of God avoid whatever they see would hinder revival. Just as a merchant would avoid anything that had a tendency to impair his credit

and defeat his goal of making money. Suppose a merchant was about to do something that you knew would injure his credit, and you go to him in the spirit of friendship and advise him not to do it. Would he turn around and say, "Show me the passage where God has prohibited this in the Bible"? No. He won't ask you to show him anything else.

A person who strongly desires the conversion of sinners doesn't need an express prohibition to prevent his doing anything that would hinder it. No danger arises in his doing anything that will defeat the very purpose of his life.

Christians become distressed unless they see the work of converting sinners going on. They call it a lamentable state in the Church if sinners are not converted no matter how rich the congregation grows or how popular their minister, their panting hearts are uneasy unless they see the work of conversion actually going on. They see that without evangelism all is vain.

THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER

God's children often trouble those who are religious from other motives and want to keep quiet and have everything go on in the "good old way." These Christians are often called "uneasy spirits in the church." If a church has a few such spirits in it, the minister will be made uneasy unless his preaching is geared to convert sinners. You sometimes hear of these men reproving the Church for living so cold and worldly. Their hearts are grieved, and their souls are in agony because sinners are pressing down to hell.

If you know people's prayer habits, it will show you how they truly feel. If a man is motivated mainly by a desire to save himself, you will hear him praying chiefly for himself--that he may have his sins pardoned and enjoy the Spirit of God.

If he is truly the friend of God and man, you will find that the burden of his prayers is for the glory of God in the salvation of sinners. He is never so enthusiastic and powerful in prayer as when he gets upon his favorite topic--the conversion of sinners. Go to a prayer meeting where such Christians pray. Instead of praying for themselves, you will hear them pouring out their souls for sinners.

You can tell how your prayer life is by whether you feel and pray most for

yourself or for sinners. If you know nothing about the spirit of prayer for sinners, you are not the true friend of God and man. Sinners are going to hell on every side! Don't tell me men are truly holy when their prayers are droned over. This is as much a matter of form as when a priest counts over his beads. Such a man deceives himself if he talks about being the true friend of God and man.

When anything is presented to true Christians that promises success in converting sinners, they don't wait for a command to do it. They only want the evidence, and they will engage in it with all their soul. The question is not, "What am I commanded to do?" but "In what way can I do most for the salvation of souls and the conversion of the world to God?"

Another characteristic of such Christians is a disposition to deny themselves in order to do good to others. God has established throughout all the universe the principle of giving. Even in the natural world rivers, oceans, and clouds all give. This is true through the whole kingdom of nature and of grace.

This is the very spirit of Christ. He sought not to please Himself but to do good to others. Children of God are always ready to deny themselves enjoyment, comforts, and even necessities, if they can do more good to others.

They continually devise new means and new measures for doing good. This is what would be expected from their continual desire to do good. They are not like people who are satisfied with doing what they call their duty. Where an individual is aiming mainly at his own salvation, he may think that if he does his duty he is discharged from responsibility, and he is satisfied. He thinks he has escaped divine wrath and gained heaven by doing what God required him to do; he cannot help whether sinners are saved or lost.

But a Christian's main objective isn't to gain heaven and avoid wrath--it is to save souls and honor God. If this objective is not attained, he is in pain.

DYING TO SAVE SOULS

The friends of God are always grieved when they see a church asleep and doing nothing for the salvation of sinners. They know it is impossible to do anything considerable for the salvation of sinners while the Church

is asleep. Those who have other objectives in view may think things are going on very well. They are not grieved when they see the professed people of God going after show and folly.

Christians are grieved if they think their minister compromises or does not reprove the church pointedly and faithfully for their sins. False converts are willing to be rocked to sleep and let their minister preach smooth, flowery sermons with no point or power. But God's children are not satisfied unless he preaches powerfully, pointedly, and boldly, with long-suffering and doctrine. Their souls are not fed, edified, or satisfied with anything that does not take hold and work for the ministry appointed by Jesus Christ.

They will always stand by a faithful minister who preaches the truth boldly and pointedly. Even if the truth he preaches hits them, they like it and say, "Let the righteous smite me. . . it shall be an excellent oil" (Psalm 141:5). When the truth is poured forth with power, their souls are fed and they grow strong in grace.

They can pray for such a minister and weep for him, that he may have the Spirit of God always with him. Others scold him and talk about his extravagance, but true Christians will stand by him and would go to the stake with him for the testimony of Jesus.

Christians are especially distressed when ministers preach sermons not adapted to convert sinners. But when a man has his heart set on the conversion of sinners and he hears a sermon not calculated to do this, he feels as if it lacked the great thing that constitutes a gospel sermon. If they hear a sermon calculated to save souls, then they are fed, and their souls rejoice.

Here you see the ground for the astonishing difference you often find in the judgment that people pass upon preaching. There is no better test of character than this. It is easy to see who is filled with the love of God and of souls by the judgment they pass upon preaching. The true friends of God and man are grieved when they hear a sermon that is not particularly designed to rouse the Church to action.

I remember a man who used to continually pray for individuals, places, and the world's conversion. Once, when he was quite exhausted from praying, he exclaimed, "Oh! my longing, aching heart! There is no

satisfying my desire for the conversion of sinners, and my soul breaks with longing." Although he had been useful beyond almost any other man his age, he saw much to do. He longed so much to see sinners saved that his mortal frame could not sustain it. "I find," he said one day, "That I am dying for strength to do more to save the souls of men; how much I want strength, that I may save souls."

If you want to move true saints, you must make use of motive drawn from their great and lading objective. Hold up the situation of sinners and show how they dishonor God, and you will find that this will move their souls and set them on fire sooner than any appeal to their hopes and fears. Show them how they can convert sinners, and their longing hearts will beat and wrestle with God in prayer and travail for souls.

And now I ask you before God, do you have these characteristics of a child of God? Do you know they belong to you? Can you say, "O Lord, you know that I love you and that these are the features of my character!"

6. LEGAL RELIGION: PRINCIPLES OF FEAR
by Charles G. Finney

"Who is on the Lord's side?" Ex 32:26.

The conduct of men invariably shows what their true and main design in life is. A man's character is as his supreme object is. If you can learn by his conduct what his leading object is, then you can know with certainty what his character is.

For those motivated by self-love or selfishness, hope and fear are the main springs of all they do in religion. These individuals are actuated by a supreme regard to their won good and the fear of evil. The hope of advantage to themselves is the foundation of all their conduct.

They make the Lord a secondary concern. Their conduct shows that they do not regard Christianity as the principal business of life but as subordinate to other things. They consider religion something that ought to come in and find a place among other things, rather like a Sabbath-day business to be confined to the closet. Christianity and business are considered as entirely separate concerns.

If they had right views of the matter, they would consider the Lord's

business the only lawful business in life. Then Christianity would characterize everything they did and would obviously be an act of obedience.

CRACKING THE WHIP OF CONSCIENCE

People motivated by selfishness perform their religious duties as a task. Such a one does not delight in communion with God. He performs prayer as a task. He does religious duties as sick people take medicine--not because they love it but because they hope to derive some benefit from it.

They possess a legal spirit and not a gospel spirit. They do what they are obliged to do for the Lord and not what they love to do. They obey God's commands but do not love them. They always inquire, in regard to duty, not how they can do good but how they can be saved. The difference between them is the same as between a convinced sinner and a true convert. The convinced sinner asks, "What must I do to be saved?" The true convert asks, "Lord, what do You want me to do?"

Fear, much more than hope, motivated them. They perform their duties chiefly because they dare not omit them. They go to communion not because they love Christ or their brethren but because they dare not stay away. They fear criticism from the Church, or they are afraid they will be damned if they neglect it. They pray not because they enjoy communion with God but because they dare not neglect Him. They have the spirit of slaves and serve God like slaves, fearing to be beaten with many stripes.

These "believers" feel as if they were obliged to perform many religious duties or be lashed by conscience and lose their hopes. Therefore, they painfully and laboriously perform many works a year, and that they call Christianity!

Their religion is not only produced by the fear of disgrace or the fear of hell, it is mostly of a negative character. They satisfy themselves with doing nothing that is very bad. Having no spiritual views, they regard the law of God chiefly as a system of prohibitions to guard men from certain sins rather than a system of benevolence fulfilled by love. If they are moral in their conduct, relatively serious and decent in their general attitude, and perform the required amount of religious exercises, they are satisfied.

Their conscience harasses them, not so much about sins of omission as sins of commission. They make a distinction between neglecting to do what God positively requires and doing what He positively forbids. The most you can say of them is that they are not bad. They seem to think little or nothing of being useful to the cause of Christ as long as they cannot be convicted of any positive transgression.

Where they have enlightened minds and tender consciences, you often find them the most rigid of all "believers." They tithe everything and are perfect Pharisees, carrying everything to the greatest extremes as far as outward strictness is concerned.

But despite all their strictness, they cannot help realizing that they are great sinners after all; and, having no just sense of gospel justification, this leaves them very unhappy. The more enlightened and tender their conscience, the more unhappy they are. Regardless of their strictness, they feel they have come short of their duty. Not having any gospel faith or anointing of the Holy Spirit that brings peace to the soul, they are unsatisfied, uneasy, and miserable.

Perhaps many of you have seen such people. Perhaps some of you are such, and you have never known what it is to feel justified before God through the blood of Jesus Christ. You don't know what it is to feel that Jesus Christ has accepted and owned you as His. You never felt in your minds what is spoken of in this text: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1)

Does such language bring this reality home to you because you experience it in you soul? Or do you, after all, still feel condemned and guilty, with no sense of pardoned sin and no peace with God or confidence in Jesus Christ?

COMFORTABLE HOPES

Legalists are encouraged and cheered by reading about saints who fell into great sins. They feel wonderfully instructed and edified when they hear the sins of God's people set forth in a strong light. Then they are comforted and their hopes are wonderfully strengthened. Instead of being humbled and distressed, feeling that such conduct is so contrary to Christianity that they could hardly believe they were saints if it had not

been found in the Bible, they feel gratified and strengthened by these things. I once knew an elder who was brought before the session of a church for the crime of adultery. He excused himself by this plea: "I did not know," he said, "why I should be expected to be better than David, the man after God's own heart."

Many professing Christians are pleased if their minister adopts a low standard and is ready to hope that almost everybody is a Christian. It is easy to see why they are pleased with such an exhibition of Christianity--it serves their main design and helps them maintain what they call a "comfortable hope," although they do so little for God.

Opposite them is the man whose main design is to rid the world of sin. He wants all men to be holy and wants to have the true standard of holiness held up. He wants all men to be saved but knows they cannot be saved unless they are truly holy. A godly man would just as soon think of Satan's going to heaven as getting a man there by cheapening the Bible standard of holiness.

Selfish people are fond of the doctrine of saint's perseverance and the doctrine of election. Often, all they want is what they call the doctrines of grace. If these doctrines can be preached comfortably without threatening their consciences too much, then they are fed.

Legalists love to have their minister preach sermons that feed Christians. Their main object is not to save sinners but to be saved themselves. Therefore, they always choose a minister not for his ability in preaching for the conversion of sinners but for his talents in feeding the church with mere abstractions.

In their prayers, they ask mainly for assurance of going to heaven. Their great object is to secure their hopes. They pray for evidence, instead of praying that their faith may be strengthened and their souls full of the Holy Spirit to pull sinners out of the fire.

Great stress is laid on emotions. If at any time they have intense religious feelings, they dwell in them and make this evidence last a long time. One season of excitement will prop their hopes as long as they can distinctly remember. It doesn't matter if they are not doing anything now, for they remember the time when they had these feelings, and that keeps their hopes alive.

If there has been a revival, and they got so involved that they could weep, pray, and exhort with feeling, they will have a comfortable hope for years on the strength of it. After the revival is over, they do nothing to promote Christianity, and their hearts become hard. They have a comfortable hope, patiently waiting for a revival to come and give them another move.

If you could listen at the door of their closets, you would hear eight-tenths of all their petitions going up for themselves. It shows how they value their own salvation in comparison with the salvation of others. At a prayer meeting it will often be the same. You would not suppose, from their prayers, that they knew there was a sinner on earth traveling the road to hell. They pray for themselves just as they do in the closet, only they link the rest of the church with them and say we.

LIVING TO HONOR GOD

Selfish people are more anxious to be prepared to die than to save sinners around them. If they ask for the Spirit of God, they want it to prepare them to die. Compare this with David's prayer: "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Psalm 51:13)

How many of you are of this character? An individual who made it his great absorbing object to do good and save sinners would not think as much about when, where, or how he will die as how he may do the most good while he lives. And as to his death, he leaves that all to God. He has long ago given his soul up to Him. Now the great question is not, "When shall I die?" but, "How shall I live to honor God?"

Many professing Christians are characterized by a fear of punishment and an unconcern for sin. True friends of God and man are more afraid of sin than of punishment. They don't ask, "If I do this, will I be punished?" Instead, they ask the question that Joseph asked: "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9). This was the spirit of a child of God--so much afraid of sin that he had no thought of punishment.

False converts often indulge in sin if they can persuade themselves that God will forgive them or when they think they can repent of it afterwards. They often reason in the way: "The pastor does this," or "The elders do

this, so why shouldn't I do the same?" They fear punishment not sin. They know they sin, but they hope to escape the punishment. This is contrary to the spirit of the true friends of God, whose absorbing object it is to get all sin out of the world. Such people are not half as afraid of hell as they are of committing sin.

Selfish people are more fond of receiving good than doing good. These people do not have the true gospel. They have never entered into the Spirit of Jesus Christ: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). A person actuated by true love to God and man enjoys what he does to benefit others far more than those who receive good from his hand. He is benevolent, and it is a gratification to him to show kindness. His heart is set upon it, and when he can do it, a holy joy is shed over his mind.

The other class are more eager to receive. They want to receive instruction more than to impart it. They want to receive comfort, but they are never ready to deny themselves to give the comforts of the gospel to others. How directly contrary this is to the spirit of the gospel, which finds its supreme happiness in communicating happiness to others. But these people want everybody to impart happiness to them, instead of striving to bless others. These two classes of characters are just as opposite as light and darkness.

Selfish people are chiefly afraid of hell, and when they are strongly convicted, they are afraid others will go there, too. They seek happiness for themselves; and when self is not in the way, they seek the same for others. They pray for sinners, not because they have such a sense of the evil that sinners are committing, but because they have a sense of the terrors of hell. They want sinners converted because they are in danger, not because they dishonor God. Their great object in praying is to secure the safety of those they pray for, as it is their great object in life to secure their own safety. They pity themselves, and they pity others. If there was no danger, they would have no motive to pray either for themselves or others.

The true friends of God and man feel compassion for sinners, too, but are much more concerned for the honor of God. They are more distressed to see God abused and dishonored than to see sinners go to hell. If God must either be forever dishonored or men go to hell, they will decide that

sinners must sink to endless torment sooner than God suffer dishonor.

True saints manifest their feelings in their prayers. You hear them praying for sinners as rebels against God--guilty criminals deserving eternal wrath. While they are full of compassion for sinners, they feel holy indignation against them for their conduct toward the blessed God.

False converts are apt to talk a great deal about their doubts. This makes up a great part of their history, and they are not prepared to do anything for the Lord because of these doubts. If the devil at any time suggests that the true friends of God and man are going to hell, the first answer they think of is, "What if I should? Only let me pull sinners out of the fire while I can."

Of course, a real Christian may have doubts. But they are much less apt to have them if they are fully bent on saving sinners. It will be very hard work for Satan to get an active church to be troubled with doubts.

REJOICING IN SELF-DENIAL

Selfish people are uneasy at the increasing calls to self-denial. The good that could be done does not enter into their thoughts because they dwell on what they would have to give up.

These aggressive attacks in the kingdom of darkness distress false converts. Their objective never was to search out and banish everything dishonorable to God or injurious to man. They never determined to clear out every evil to soul or body from the earth. Therefore, they are distressed by those who are truly engaged to search out and do away with evil.

When legalists are called upon to deny themselves for the sake of doing good, instead of it being a pleasant thing, it causes them unmingled pain. Such a one does not know anything about enjoying self-denial. He cannot understand how anybody can rejoice in denying himself for the sake of doing good to others. He thinks it is a height in Christianity that he has not attained.

Yet the true friend of God and man, whose heart is determined to do good, never enjoys spending money as much as when he gives to promote Christ's Kingdom. If he is really holy, he knows it is the best thing he can do with his money. He's even sorry to have to use money for

anything else when there are so many opportunities to do good with it.

If an individual has his heart set upon something, all the money he can save for that objective is pleasing to him. The more he can save from other objectives for this cause, the happier he is. If he finds it hard to give money to the Lord, his heart is not set on it. If it were, he would give his money with joy.

What would you think of a man who protested against giving money to the Church and yet was excited about missions? After calling for money, he himself never even gave five dollars. It would be obvious that his heart was not truly set on the cause of Christ. If it was, he would give his money as freely as water.

These false converts are not concerned with promoting revivals. They always have to be dragged into the work. When a revival begins and the excitement is great, then they come in and appear to be excited. But you never see them taking the lead or striking out ahead.

As a matter of fact, these hypocrites do not convert sinners to God. They may do good, in various ways--and so may Satan do good deeds. But as a general thing. they do not pull sinners out of the fire. The reason is that this is not their great objective. How is it with you? Do you absolutely succeed in converting sinners? Is there anyone who will look to you as the instrument of his conversion? If you were truly on fire, you could not rest satisfied without doing it, and you would work in such earnest and with such agonizing prayer that you would do it.

WHOM DO YOU SERVE?

Selfish people don't show much distress when they discover sin. They don't rebuke it. They love to mingle in scenes where sin is committed, and they can hear and join in vain conversation. Their spirit is worldly, and they love worldly company. Instead of hating even the garment spotted with the flesh, they love to hang around the confines of sin, as if it satisfied them.

If any of the missions are in need, they neither know nor feel it. If missions prosper, they take no interest in it. They very likely do not read any Christian literature. Or, if they do read it, they read only the trivial news. The true friend of God and man, on the other hand, love to learn about revivals and missions. When they hear that the Lord has poured

out His Spirit on a mission, a glow of holy joy surges through Him.

Lovers of self don't aim at anything higher than a legal, painful, and negative religion. The love of Jesus doesn't constrain them to constant warfare against sin and a desire to do all the good in their power. What they do is done only because they think they must, and they maintain a formal, heartless, and worthless piety.

If an extended meeting is proposed, you will generally find these people making objections. If any other special effort is proposed, they come reluctantly and prefer the "good old way." They feel angry at being obliged to add so much every year to their religion in order to maintain their hope.

These selfish people don't pray in their closets because they love to pray; they think it's their duty, and they dare not neglect it. The Bible isn't sweet to their souls. They don't enjoy the reading, as a person enjoys exquisite delights, but read it because it's their duty to read it. They know it's not right to profess to be a Christian and not read the Bible; but they find it a dry book.

Slight excuses keep them away from prayer meetings. They never go unless they find it necessary to keep up appearances or maintain their hope. And when they do go, instead of having their souls melted and fired with love, they are cold, listless and dull--and glad when it is over.

Their hearts are not agonized with such thoughts as this: How long will wickedness prevail? When will this wretched world be free from sin and death? When will men stop sinning against God? Instead they ask, "When will I go to heaven and be free from all my trails and cares?"

This religion describes the religion of the majority of professing Christians, and they are radically defective.

True Christianity is far from this. It differs as much from Christianity as much as the Pharisees differed from Christ--as much as the true gospel differs from legal religion.

To which of these classes do you belong? It is eternally important that you know for certain what your true character is--whether you are motivated by true love to God and man or whether you are religious out of regard to yourself. Are you the true friend of God and man or not?

Settle this, and then go to work for God.

LEGAL RELIGION: PRINCIPLES OF FEAR

1. The _____ invariably shows_____

2. If you can learn by _____ then you can _____

3. For those motivated by _____, _____ and _____ are the _____.

4. The hope of _____ is the foundation of all their conduct.

5. They possess _____ not _____

6. The convicted sinner asks _____ the true convert asks _____

7. These "believers" feel as if _____ _____

8. Having no spiritual views, they regard

9. When are these people satisfied?

10. Their conscience harasses them, not so much

_____.

11. Enlightened minds and tender consciences often produce the most _____.

12. These are most unhappy, regardless of their strictness, they feel _____.

13. Not having any _____ or _____,

14. Legalists are

15. Many professing Christians are pleased if _____.

16. A godly man would

17. Legalists love to have

Their main object is

18. To legalists, it doesn't matter if

for they remember_____

19. They pray for

20. Selfish people are more _____

21. Many professing Christians are characterized by _____.

True friends of God _____.

22. False converts often indulge _____if_____

They fear _____ not _____.

23. True friends of God are not half _____

24. Selfish people are more fond of _____

They want to receive instruction _____.

They want to receive comfort but _____

25. The Spirit of the Gospel finds its supreme happiness _____

_____.

26. Selfish people are chiefly _____

27. They want sinners converted because _____,

not because _____

28. If there was no _____, they would have no _____.

29. True friends of God and men feel _____, but are more _____.

They are more distressed _____ than to _____.

30. If man must either _____, they will decide _____ sooner than _____.

31. False converts are apt _____ .

32. The good that could be done does not enter into the thoughts of the selfish because _____

33. A holy person is even sorry to have to use _____.

34. Selfish people don't show _____

They don't _____

35. What is eternally important _____ .

7. CAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC EYE
by Charles G. Finney

"For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God"--John 12:43

A plain distinction exists between self-love, or the simple desire for happiness, and selfishness. Self-love, the desire for happiness and dread

of misery, is a part of our frame as God made us and intended us to be. Its indulgence, within the limits of the law of God, is not sinful. But whenever it is pursued contrary to the law of God, it becomes sinful.

When the desire for happiness or the dread of misery becomes our controlling principle, and we prefer our own gratification to some greater interest, it becomes selfishness. If to avoid pain or procure happiness we sacrifice greater interests, we violate the great law of disinterested benevolence. It is no longer self-love, acting within lawful bounds, but selfishness.

Professing Christians who are moved by hope or fear are moved sometimes by self-love and sometimes by selfishness. Their supreme object is not to glorify God but to secure their own salvation. The friends of God and the friends of man agree in many things, and if you look only at the things in which they agree, you cannot distinguish between them. Only a close observation of those things in which they differ will reveal that the main design of the latter class is not to glorify God but to secure their own salvation. In that way we can see their supreme object. When they do the same thing, outwardly, as the servants of God, they do them from entirely different motives. Consequently, the acts themselves are, in the sight of God, of an entirely different character.

COMMITMENT TO SELF

Some professing Christians "love the praise of men more than the praise of God." I don't mean that a mere regard for reputation has led this class to profess the faith. Christianity has always been too unpopular with most people to render it a general thing to become professing Christians from a regard to reputation. But when becoming a Christian increases popularity, a complex motive operates--the hope of securing happiness in a future world and an increase in reputation here.

Many are led to profess Christianity when, on close examination, the leading object is the good opinion of their fellowmen. Their commitment turns on this. Although they profess to be sincere Christians, you can see by their conduct that they won't do anything to forfeit this good opinion of men. They will not encounter the persecution that they must to root sin out of the world.

Impenitent sinners are always influenced by one of two things in their

attempts to mimic Christianity. Either they do them out of regard to natural principles--as compassion or self-love--or from selfishness. They are done either out of regard to their own reputation or happiness or the gratification of some natural principle that has no moral character. They love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

People who make the praise of men their idol do what the apostle Paul says certain persons did in his day. For that reason they remained ignorant of true doctrine: they "Measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise" (2 Corinthians 10:12)

Instead of making Jesus Christ their standard of comparison and the Bible their rule of life, many individuals aim at no such thing. They never seriously dreamed of making the Bible their standard. Their great concern is to do as many things and be as pious as the other people in their churches. Their object is to maintain a respectable profession of Christianity. Instead of seriously seeking what the Bible requires and asking how Jesus Christ would act in such and such a case, they look at "common" Christianity and are satisfied with mimicking it. Their object is not to do what the Bible says but what is respectable.

These people do not trouble themselves about elevating the standard of holiness around them. They are not troubled that the general standard of holiness is low in the Church or that it is difficult to bring sinners to repentance. They think the standard at the present time is high enough. While the real friends of God and man are complaining about the standard and trying to wake up the Church, it seems to them like a meddlesome, uneasy disposition.

When Jesus Christ denounced the scribes and Pharisees, they said, "He hath a devil" (John 10:20). Today they may say, "Why, he is denouncing our doctors of divinity and our best men, and he even dares to tell us that except our righteousness exceeds theirs, we cannot enter the Kingdom of heaven. What a bad spirit he has!"

A large part of the Church has this spirit, and every effort to open the eyes of the Church and to make Christians see that they live like hypocrites only excites malice and causes reproach. They say, "What a bad spirit he shows, so unkind, nothing like the meek, kind, and loving spirit of the Son of God." They forget how Jesus Christ cursed those who

has the reputation of being the most pious people in that day. It was the hypocritical spirit exhibited by professing holy men that roused His soul, moved His indignation, and called forth His burning torrents of denunciation. Jesus complained about people who set up patterns of piety, and He called them hypocrites and thundered over their heads the terrible words, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell!" (Matthew 23:33)

A RELIGION OF REPUTATION

Too many people are scrupulous in observing what the public considers acceptable, while they easily forget what public sentiment does not enforce.

Consider, for example, prohibition. How many are there who yielded to public sentiment what they never would yield to God or man? At first they waited to see what would happen, They resisted giving up alcohol. But when that became popular, and they found that they could do very well without it, they gave it up. But they were determined to yield no further than public sentiment drove them. It was not their objective to slay the monster but to maintain a good character. They loved the praise of men more that the praise of God.

Many individuals keep the Sabbath not because they love God but because it is respectable. This is obvious because they keep it while they are among their acquaintances or where they are known. But when they travel to where they are not known--where it will not be a public disgrace--you will find them skipping church altogether.

This class of people abstain from all sins that are abhorred by the public, but they do other things just as bad that are not frowned upon. They neglect things that are ordained in the Word of God. Where an individual habitually disobeys any command of God, it is certain that the obedience he appears to render is not from love to God but from other motives. He does not, in fact, obey any command of God.

The apostle James has settled this question: "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Obedience to God's commands implies an obedient state of the heart; therefore, nothing is obedience that does not imply a supreme regard to the authority of God.

If a man's heart is right, then he regards whatever God commands as more important than anything else. And if a man regards anything as superior to God's authority, that is his idol. Whatever we supremely regard is our God--reputation, comfort, riches, honor, or whatever we place first in our hearts.

Whatever a man's reason is for habitually neglecting anything he knows to be the command of God or sees to promote the Kingdom of Christ, he regards that as supreme. There is nothing acceptable to God in any of his services. His religion is the religion of public sentiment. It is public sentiment to which he yields obedience, in all his conduct, and not the glory of God.

How about you? Do you habitually neglect God's requirement because they aren't sustained and enforced by public sentiment? If you claim to be a Christian, I presume that you do not neglect any requirement that is strongly urged by public sentiment.

But do you habitually neglect some duties? Do you practice things accepted by men that you know are contrary to the law of God? If you do, then you regard the opinions of men more than the judgment of God.

A man who is obedient at home will often toss off a glass of brandy or step up to a bar and order liquor the second he is away. When I was in the Mediterranean, at Messina, a gentleman asked me if I would go to a bar with him. "What! A minister go to a bar?"

"Why, you are away from home, and no one would know it."

"But would not God know it?" It was plain that he thought that, although I was a minister, I could go to a bar when I was away from home. No matter if God knew it, as long as men did not know it. And how did he get that idea? By seeing ministers who do just such things!

If you allow yourselves any secret sins and think nobody know about it, know that God sees it and has already written down your name--hypocrite. You are more afraid of disgrace in the eye or mortals than of disgrace in the eye of God. If you loved God supremely, it would be a small thing to you that everybody else knew your sins, in comparison with having them known to God. If tempted in anything, you would exclaim, "What! Shall I sin under the eye of God?"

Professing Christians may not practice any secret sins, but they neglect duties like private prayer. They go to communion and appear very pious on Sunday, but their prayer closet is unknown to God or man. Reputation is their idol. They dread to lose their reputation more than to offend God.

These people have a conscience in things that are popular and no conscience at all on things that are not scrutinized by the public. You can preach to them and clearly prove it--even make them confess that it is their duty. If, however, it is not a matter of reputation, they will go on as before, Show them a "Thus saith the Lord" and make them see that their actions are inconsistent with Christian perfection and contrary to Jesus' interests, and still they will not change. They regard the requirements of public opinion and love the praise of men more than the praise of God.

FANATICAL OR FASHIONABLE?

This class of people generally dread the thought of being considered fanatical. They are ignorant that the world is wrong! The public sentiment of the world is against God, and everyone who intends to serve God must set his face against the sentiment of the world. In a world of rebels, public sentiment is obviously as wrong as the controversy with God. The world is wrong, and God's ways are directly against their ways. Consequently, it is true, and always has been true, that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). They will be called fanatical, superstitious, irrational, etc; they always have been, and they always will be.

But these opinion-oriented people will never go further than is consistent with the expectations of worldly men. They say they must do this or that in order to influence such men. Opposite this are the true friends of God and man. Their leading aim is to turn the world upside down, bring all men to obey God, and remold opinions of men to conform to the Word of God.

Many professing Christians are intent on making friends on both sides and always take the middle course. They avoid the reputation of being over righteous on the one hand and, on the other hand, of being lax or irreligious. For centuries a person could maintain a reputable profession of religion without ever being called fanatical. And the standard is still so low that probably the great mass of the Protestant churches are trying to occupy this middle ground.

They mean to have friends on both sides. They are not considered reprobates or fanatics. They are fashionable Christians!

They may be called fashionable Christians for two reasons. One is that their style of religion is popular and fashionable; and the other is that they generally follow worldly fashions. Their aim is to please the world. No matter what God requires, they are determined to keep peace with the enemies of God. They have more regard to men that to God. And if they ever have to choose between displeasing their friends and neighbors and offending God, they will offend God. If public sentiment clashes with the commands of God, they will yield to public sentiment.

Although they will not exercise self-denial to gain the applause of God, They will exercise great self-denial to gain the applause of men. The men who gave up liquor because public sentiment rendered it necessary will give up wine, also, whenever a powerful public sentiment demands it--and not until then.

If a minister of this class preaches a sermon, he is more anxious to know what the people thought of it than to know what God thought of it. And if he fails, the disgrace of it with men cuts him ten times more than the thought that he has dishonored God or hindered the salvation of souls.

When some secret sin has been found, he is more distressed about it because he is disgraced than because God is dishonored. Or, if he falls into open sin, he cares as much about the disgrace as the sin.

These fashionable Christians are more anxious about their appearance in the eyes of the world than in the eyes of God. Females of this character are vastly more anxious how the body appears in the eyes of men than how the heart appears in the eyes of God. Such a one will take all week getting everything in order to make herself appear lovely, but will not spend half an hour in her closet to prepare her heart before God.

Everybody can see what this religion is the moment it is held up to view. Nobody is at a loss to say what that man or that woman's name is--hypocrite. They will go into the house of God with their heart dark as midnight, while everything in their external appearance is attractive and respectable. They must appear well in the eyes of men, no matter what God sees. The heart may be dark, disordered, and polluted, and they don't care as long as the eye of man detects no blemish.

OPPOSING THE LIGHT

Many people refuse to confess their sins in the manner that the law of God requires. If they are required to confess more than they think consistent with their reputation, they are more anxious how it will affect their character than whether God is satisfied.

Search your hearts, you that have made confessions, and see what most affects your minds--what God thought of it or what men thought of it. Have you refused to confess what you knew God required because it would hurt your reputation among men? Will not God judge your hearts?

People who profess Christ are often so ashamed to do their duty that they will not do it. When a person is too ashamed to do what God requires, it is plain that his own reputation is his idol. How many people are ashamed to acknowledge Jesus Christ, ashamed to reprove sin, and ashamed to speak out when Christ is attacked? If they supremely regarded God, could they ever be ashamed of doing their duty?

Suppose a man's wife was slandered, would he be ashamed to defend her? By no means. If his children were abused, would he be ashamed to help them? Not if he loved them. It would not be shame that would deter him from defending his wife or children.

These people will not take decided ground when they are among the enemies of truth, where they would be subject to reproach for doing it. They are bold when among friends and make a great display of their courage. But when put to the trial, they will deny the Lord Jesus Christ before His enemies. They will put Him to open shame rather than rebuke wickedness or speak out in His cause among His enemies.

Many oppose all advancing light on practical subjects. They are disturbed by every new proposal that draws on their wallets or breaks in upon their habitual self-indulgence. You may talk and preach as much in favor of it as you please. There is only one way to reach these people, and that is by creating a new public sentiment. When you have convinced--through the Holy Spirit--a sufficient number in the community to create a public sentiment in its favor, then they will adopt your new proposals, but not before.

Some professing Christians are often opposed to men, measures, and things that are unpopular and subject to reproach; but when they become

popular, they fall in with them. Let a minister go through the churches in any state and wake them up. While he is little known, these people are not afraid to speak against him. But if he gains influence, they will commend him and profess to be his warmest friends. Before Jesus' death, He had a certain degree of popularity. Multitudes followed Him through the streets, crying, "Hosanna, Hosanna!" But as soon as He was arrested, they all turned and began to cry, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

As they flow with the tide when a man is reproached, they will flow with the tide when he is honored. One exception is when they have become so committed to the opposition that they cannot change without disgrace. They they will be silent until another opportunity comes up for letting out the burning fires within them.

Very often when a revival begins, it is opposed by certain members of the church. They do not like to have such things carried on and are afraid there is too much excitement. But the work goes on, and soon they seem to fall in and go with the multitude. Then, when the revival is over and the church grows cold again, you will find them renewing their opposition to the work. In the end, they may induce the church itself to criticize the very revival that they had so much enjoyed.

The same has been true in regard to missions, and if anything unfavorable to missions occurred, you would find plenty of these fair weather supporters turning to the opposition.

THE FEAR OF MAN

If anything is proposed to promote Christianity, opinion-loving people are very sensitive and careful not to have anything done that is unpopular. They ask what the other churches will think. If it is likely to bring reproach on their church or their minister, in view of the ungodly or the other churches, they are distressed about it. No matter how much good it will do or how many souls it will save, they do not want to have anything done to injure the respectability of their church.

The true friends of God and man are always forming and correcting public sentiment on all points where it is wrong. With all their hearts, they search out evils in order to reform the world and drive iniquity from the earth. The other class are always following public sentiment as it is. They are ready to brand as imprudent or rash any man or anything that goes to

stem the tide of public sentiment and turn it the other way.

People can easily make themselves believe certain things are acts of piety that are actually only acts of hypocrisy. They do the things that outwardly pertain to piety, and they give themselves credit for being holy. Their motives are all corrupt and hollow, not one of them drawn from a supreme regard to God's authority. This is manifest from the fact that they do nothing except where God's requirements are backed by public sentiment. Unless you aim to do all your duty and yield obedience in everything, the piety you claim is sin against God.

How many of you would break out into open sin if not for the restraints of public sentiment, the fear of disgrace, and the desire to gain the credit of virtue? True holiness is from a regard to the authority of God, despite public sentiment. Otherwise, you do it for the sake of gaining credit in the eyes of men. But if you expect any favor from God, you will assuredly be disappointed. The only reward He will bestow upon such hypocrisy is damnation.

Who of you will agree to take the Bible for your standard, Jesus Christ for your example, and do what is right whatever man may say or think? Everyone that is not willing to take this ground must regard himself as a stranger to the grace of God. He is by no means in a state of justification. If he is not resolved upon doing what he knows to be right, it is positive proof that he loves the praise of men more than the praise of God.

To be a Christian is to be governed by the authority of God in all things, to live not by hopes and fears but by supreme consecration of yourself unto God. If you intend to be a Christian, you must count the cost. I will not flatter you. I will never try to coax you to become religious by keeping back the truth. You must give yourselves wholly unto Christ. You cannot float along to heaven on the waves of public sentiment.

Who is on the Lord's side? Who is willing to say, "We will no longer do evil but are determined to do the will of God in all things--let the world think or say of us what it may"? If you are willing to do this, then kneel and pray that God would accept and seal your solemn covenant to obey Him in everything.

CAUGHT IN THE PUBLIC EYE

1. Self-love is the desire for _____ and the dread of

_____.

2. When is indulgence of self-love sinful?

_____.

3. When does self-love become selfishness?

_____ .

4. Many are led to profess Christianity when the leading object is

_____ .

5. Impenitent sinners, when they mimic Christianity, are influenced by one of two things: Either they

_____ or from

_____.

6. People who make the _____ their idol remain

_____ of the true doctrine.

7. The object of those who mimic Christianity is to maintain a

_____.

They look at _____ and are

satisfied with mimicing it.

8. These people do not trouble themselves about

_____ .

9. Every effort to open the eyes of the Church and to make _____

only

10. What do they forget?

_____ .

11. Where an individual habitually

it is certain

12. If a man's heart is right, then he

.

13. What is a man's idol?

14. Whatever we supremely regard _____.

15. If you loved God supremely, it would be a _____

in comparison to _____.

16. Many dread to lose _____more than _____.

17. Even after showing professing Christians that their actions are _____

and _____ Why will they not change? _____ .

18. The public sentiment of

and everyone who intends to

19. Consequently, it is true that _____
.

20. Many professing Christians are _____
.

21. There are two reasons for "fashionable" Christians:

1) _____

2) _____

22. Although they will not exercise _____
they will _____

23. A hypocrite's heart may be _____ and _____
and they don't care _____

24. There is only one way to reach hypocrites, and that is by _____

25. Hypocrites flow with the tide when _____
and they will _____
One exception is:_____
_____.

26. If anything is proposed to promote Christianity, opinion-loving people

_____ .

27. The true friends of God and man are _____

28. Unless you aim to do _____

and yield obedience _____ the piety _____.

29. True Holiness is _____

.

30. What is positive proof that one loves the praise of men more than the praise of God?

.

31. To be a Christian is to be _____

.

to live not by _____ but by _____.

8. CONFORMITY TO THE WORLD
by Charles G. Finney

"Be not conformed to this world"--Romans 12:2

Christians should not refuse to benefit by the useful arts, improvements, and discoveries of the world. The friends of God are not only privileged but bound to avail themselves of these. We must use all the useful arts and improvements of mankind for the Lord.

Christians, however, must not conform to the world in the following things: business, fashion, and politics. In these areas, Christians should

not do as the world does or adopt its principles or practices. We are by no means to act from the same motives or pursue our objectives in the same manner that the world does.

LOOKING OUT FOR NUMBER ONE

The first reason why you must not conform to this world in business is that the principle of the world is supreme selfishness. This is universally true. Worldly business is governed and regulated by supreme and unmixed selfishness, with no regard to the commands of God, the glory of God, or the welfare of men.

The business of the world consult their own interest and seek their own benefit, not the benefit of those they deal with. Whoever heard of a worldly businessman doing business for the benefit of those he dealt with? It is always for his own benefit.

Christians are required to act exactly opposite to worldly business principles: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (1 Corinthians 10:24). They are required to copy the example of Jesus Christ. Did He ever make bargains for His own advantage? Can His followers adopt the principles of the world, which contain in them the seeds of hell?

Conformity to the world is totally inconsistent with the love of God and man. The whole system recognizes only the love of self. Go through all the ranks of businessmen, from the man who sells candy on the sidewalk to the greatest wholesale merchant in the United States, and you will find this maxim--look out for number one. The norm is to do, as far as the rules of honesty will allow, all that will advance your own interest regardless of the interest of others.

Ungodly men will not deny that these are the principles of which business is done in the world. The man who pursues this course is universally regarded as doing business on business principles.

Are these rules of conduct consistent with holiness, the love of God and man, the spirit of the gospel, or the example of Jesus Christ? Can a man conform to the world in these principles and still love God? Impossible! No two things can be more opposite.

What did the Spirit of Jesus exemplify on earth? It was self-denial,

benevolence, and sacrifice of Himself for others. He exhibited the same Spirit that God does, who gratifies His benevolent heart in doing good to others. The faith of the gospel is to be like God, joyfully denying self to do good. This is the gospel maxim: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

BIBLICAL BUSINESS PRINCIPLES

"Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Philippians 2:4). In contrast to this verse, the businessman of the world says, "Look out for number one." This maxim was made by men who knew and cared no more for the gospel than the heathen do. Why should Christians conform to a principle such as this?

To conform to the world in the pursuits of business is a flat contradiction of the confirmations that Christians make when they enter the Church. What vows do you make when you enter the Church? Is it not to renounce the world and live for God, to be led by the Holy Spirit, to possess supreme love to God, to renounce self, to give yourself to glorify God, and to do good to men? You profess not to love the world, its honors, or its riches. Around the communion table, with your hands on the broken body of your Savior, you confess these to be your principles and pledge yourself to live by them.

Then what do you do? Go away and follow rules invented by men, who love the world and whose stated objective is to gain the world? Is this your way? If so, repent! You are sworn before God to a different course, and when you pursue the business principles of the world, you show that you are perjured wretches.

Conformity to the world is such an obvious contradiction of the principles of the gospel that sinners cannot understand its true nature and object. The object of the gospel is to raise men above the love and influence of the world and place them on higher ground. When sinners see professing Christians acting on the same principle as other men, how can they understand the true principles of the gospel or know what heavenly-mindedness, self-denial, and benevolence is?

This spirit of conformity to the world has already eaten out the love of God from the Church. Show me a young convert, while his heart is warm and the love of God glows out from his lips. What does he care about the

world? Call his attention to it, point him to its riches and honors, and try to engage him in their pursuit--he loathes the thought.

Then, if he goes into business on the principles of the world for one year, you will no longer find the love of God glowing in his heart. His faith will become the religion of conscience. Dry, meagre, and uninfluential, it will have no glowing love of God moving him to acts of benevolence.

Conformity to the world in business is one of the greatest stumbling blocks to converting sinners. What do wicked men think when they see professing Christians pretending to believe what the Bible teaches and yet as eager as anybody to make the best bargains and deal as hard as the most worldly? They say, "I see these Christians doing the same thing we do, looking out for number one."

These are not false accusations. Many Christians pursue the world in the same spirit, by the same maxims, and to the same degree that the ungodly do. The world says, "Look at the church! I don't think they are any better than I am. They're as worldly as I am."

If professing Christians act on the same principles as worldly men, they will have the same reward. They are set down in God's book of remembrance as hypocrites pretending to be the friends of God. For whoever loves the world is the enemy of God. (See James 4:4)

If Christians would turn the tables over and do business on gospel principles, it would shake the world. It would ring louder than thunder. If the ungodly could see Christians businessmen concerned with seeking not their own wealth but every man another's wealth, and setting no value on the world, any further than it can be a means of glorifying God, what do you think the effect would be?

What effect did it have in Jerusalem when the early Christians gave up their businesses and turned out en masse to pursue the salvation of the world? A few ignorant fishermen and a few humble women turned the world upside down. If the Church lived so now, it would cover the world with confusion and overwhelm them with convictions of sin. Infidelity would hide its head, dissension would be driven from the Church, and this charming, blessed spirit of love would go over the world like ocean waves.

WHEN PRIDE REIGNS

The world of fashion is directly at war with the spirit of the gospel. What is minding earthly things if it is not to follow the fashions of the world that continually fluctuate in their forms? Many men of wealth think they care nothing for fashion. They are occupied with their businesses, and they trust their tailors. But if they made an unfashionable garment, you would see that the affluent do care about fashions.

Although their thoughts are not much on the fashions, they have a higher object in view. They think it beneath the dignity of a minister to preach about fashion. They overlook the fact that with most men fashion is everything. Most people are not rich and never expect to be, but they try to make a respectable appearance. Nine-tenths of the population looks to the world and follows the fashions. For this they strain every nerve. And this is what they set their hearts on and what they live for.

The rich man deceives himself, therefore, if he supposes that fashion is a little thing. Most people set their mind upon it. The thing they look for in life is to have their dress, hair, furniture, car, etc., like other people's--respectable, as they call it.

When people join the Church, they profess to give up the spirit that gives rise to fashion. They profess to renounce the vanities of the world, repent of their pride, follow the meek and lowly Savior, and to live for God. And now what do they do? Nothing will satisfy them that is not in the height of fashion.

What lies at the bottom of all this shifting scenery? What produces all this gaudy show and display? It is the love applause. When Christians follow the changes of fashion, they pronounce all this innocent. The waste of money, time, and thought, the feeding and cherishing of vanity, and the love of applause is approved by the Church when she conforms to the world.

Like the ungodly, many professing Christians show that they love the world by their conduct. They give evidence that they are motivated by one principle: the love of fashion. When "Christians" do this, they show most clearly that they love the praise of men. Like sinners, they love admiration and flattery. Isn't this inconsistent with Christian principle, to follow the very things that are set up by the pride, fashion, and lust of the ungodly?

STEWARDS OF REPUTATION

Conforming to the world in fashion shows that you do not hold yourself accountable to God for the way you spend money. You practically disown the stewardship of your wealth. By spending money to gratify your own vanity and lust, you take off the keen edge of truth that ought to cut sinners in two. You practically deny that the earth is the Lord's!

The cry comes to our ears on every wind from the lost of all nations, "Come over and help us, come over and help us." Every week brings some call for tracts and Bibles from missionaries. If you choose to spend money in following the fashions, it is obvious that reputation is your idol.

Take the case of a woman whose husband has died. There she is, toiling and saving, rising up early and sitting up late. She eats the bread of carefulness because the father of her children is dead. Go to that woman and tell her that it is innocent for her to follow the fashions and dress like her neighbors--will she do it? Why not? She doesn't want to do it. She hardly buys what she needs, so intent is she on raising her children.

Suppose a person loved God, the souls of men, and the Kingdom of Christ--does he need a direct order from God to prevent him from spending his money and wasting his life in following the fashion? No; instead he will probably need an order to take what he needs for his own comfort and the support of his life.

Take the case of Timothy. Did he need a prohibition to stop him from indulging in wine? On the contrary, he was so cautious that it required and express injunction from God to make him drink a little wine as medicine. (See 1 Timothy 5:23)

Many Christians have followed the world of fashion so closely that God seems to have given them over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh. They have little or no religious feeling, no spirit of prayer, and no zeal for the glory of God or the conversion of sinners. The Holy Spirit seems to have left them.

When the elders and leaders in a church are fashionable Christians, they drag the whole church along with them into the train of fashion. Once a rich Christian lady comes to the house of God in full fashion, the whole church is tempted to follow as far as they can.

Suppose a reformed alcoholic should surround himself with wine, brandy and hard liquor and from time to time taste a little--isn't he tempting himself? Or imagine a woman who has been brought up in the spirit of pride and show but is reformed. If she keeps her wardrobe and continues to follow the fashions, pride will drag her backward as sure as she lives. She tempts herself to sin and folly.

By following the fashions, you are setting the world into a fierce and hot pursuit of these things. The very things that the world loves and are sure to have scruples about, professing Christians fall in with and follow. You thus tempt the world to continue in the pursuit of what will destroy their souls in hell.

When you follow the fashions, you open your heart to the devil. You keep it for him--empty, swept, and garnished. Every woman or man that follows the fashions may rely upon it: they are helping Satan to tempt them to pride and sin.

If professing Christians would show their contempt for these things and not follow or regard them, it would shame and convince the world that they were striving for God and for eternity! How irresistible it would be. What an overwhelming testimony in favor of Christianity. What thunders it would pour into the ears of the world to wake them up to follow God!

ELECTING GODLY CANDIDATES

Christians also must not be conformed to the world in politics. The politics of the world are entirely dishonest. The policy of every party is to cover up the defects of their own candidate and the good qualities of the opposing candidate. Isn't this dishonest? Every party holds up its candidate as a piece of perfection and them aims to ride him into office by any means, fair or foul. No man that is committed to a party can be entirely honest. Can a Christian do this and keep a clear conscience?

By falling in with the world in politics, Christians are guilty of setting up rulers over them (by their own vote) who do not fear or love God and who defy the law of God. Some politicians break the Sabbath, commit adultery, fight, swear profanely, and leave the laws unexecuted. Christians put them into office! Where parties are divided, as they are in this country, there are enough Christians to tip the scale in any election.

By following the present course of politics, you are helping to undermine

all government and order in the land. This great nation staggers and reels because the laws are broken and trampled under foot, and the executive power refuses to act. Either politicians don't want to put down disorder, or they compromise and let the devil rule. This is true in all parts of the country and in all parties. Can a Christian be consistent with his profession of faith and still vote for men like this? What greater stumbling block can we place before sinners?

No wonder the world has a hard time believing "Christian candidates." I myself often doubt whether many of them believe the Bible. They show, as far as evidence goes, that there is no change of heart.

What is Christianity? Is it going to the communion table once a month and sometimes to a prayer meeting? Is that a change of heart? The world would be foolish to believe in a change of heart on such evidence.

If Christians acted perfectly conscientious and consistent in this matter, they would say, "We will not vote for any man unless he fears God and will rule the people in righteousness." Then ungodly men wouldn't nominate candidates who set themselves against the law. Every candidate would be obliged to show that he was prepared to act from higher motives. Then he would strive to make the country prosperous, promote virtue, and put down vice, oppression, and disorder. They would have to do all they could to make the people happy and holy. It would shame dishonest politicians to show that the love of God and man is the motive that Christians have in view. What a blessed influence would flow over the land!

If we had a holy ministry, it would be far more important than an educated ministry. If ministers were holy, they wouldn't need so much education. I don't mean to undervalue an educated ministry. Let ministers be educated as much as they can--the more the better, as long as they are holy.

But to suppose that education can convert the world is a farce. Let the ministry have the spirit of prayer, and let the baptism of the Holy Spirit be upon them. Then they will spread the gospel. If Christians lived as they should, the Church would shake the world. The report would soon fill every wind, until the earth was full of excitement and inquiry. Conversions would multiply like the drops of morning dew.

BE YE SEPARATE!

Christians must be singular. They are called to be a peculiar people, essentially different from the rest of mankind. To argue that we are not to be singular is to maintain that we are to be conformed to the world. This is the direct opposite of the command in the text.

The nearer you bring the Church to the world, the more you annihilate the reasons for their changing sides and coming to Jesus Christ. Unless you separate from them and show that you are not of them in any respect, how can you make the ungodly feel that a great change is necessary? The change that is necessary is a change of heart.

Many people may argue that if Christians are too separate, then people will become disgusted and take to the world altogether. This is about as reasonable as it would be for a sober man to get drunk now and then to avoid offending alcoholics or to retain his influence over them. People must see in the lives of Christians that they have given up the love of the world and its pride. We must live holy lives in watchfulness, self-denial, and active benevolence.

Your heart is not right unless your conduct is right. What is outward conduct but the acting out of the heart? If your heart was right, you would not want to follow the world.

By non-conformity to the world, a great deal of time may be saved for doing good that is now consumed and wasted in joining in the pursuits of the world. At the same time, Christians would preserve their peace of conscience, enjoy communion with God, have the spirit of prayer, and possess far greater usefulness.

Something must be done! You say that you want to have sinners converted. But what help is it if they sink right back again into conformity to the world? I am filled with pain at the Church's conduct. What are the results of the glorious revivals we have had? I believe they were genuine revivals and outpourings of the Holy Spirit, yet many converts are a disgrace to the Lord!

One holy church crucified to the world would do more to promote Christianity than all the churches in the country, living as they now do. If I had strength to go through the churches, I would preach to bring them up to the gospel standard of holy living. Of what use is it to convert sinners

and make them such Christians as these? Of what use is it to try to convert sinners and make them feel that there is something in religion, and them by your conformity to the world prove that there is nothing in it?

Where shall the Lord look for a church--like the first Church--that will be separate and serve God?

Do you believe that God commands you not to be conformed to the world? Do you believe it? And dare you obey it, regardless of what people say about you? Will you separate yourself from the world and never again be controlled by its principles and practices? Will you do it?

9. TRUE AND FALSE REPENTANCE
by Charles G. Finney

"For Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea.what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourself to be clear in this matter"--2 Corin 7:10-11.

True repentance involves a change of opinion respecting the nature of sin followed by a corresponding change of feeling toward sin. Feeling is the result of thought. When this change of opinion produces a corresponding change of feeling, if the opinion is right and the feeling corresponds, this is true repentance. Godly sorrow, which God requires, must spring from His views of sin.

To one who truly repents, sin looks very different than it does to him who has not repented. Instead of looking desirable or fascinating, it looks odious and detestable. He is astonished that he ever could have desired such a thing. Impenitent sinners may look at sin and see that it will ruin them because God will punish them for it. But it still appears in itself desirable. They love it. If it could end in happiness, they would never think of abandoning their sin.

But one who truly repents looks at his own conduct as perfectly hateful. He looks back and exclaims, "How detestable and worthy of hell my sin was."

Sinners don't see why God threatens sin with such terrible punishment. They love it so much that they cannot see why God thinks it is worthy of everlasting judgment. When sinners are strongly convicted, they see sin in the same light as a Christian does. Then all they need is a corresponding change in feeling to be saved.

Many sinners reflect on their relationship to God and know that they deserve eternal death, but their heart doesn't agree with God's opinions. This is the case with the demons and wicked spirits in hell. A change of opinion is indispensable to true repentance and always precedes it. There may be a change of opinion without repentance, but no genuine repentance occurs without a change of opinion.

The unsaved sinner things it utterly incredible that sin deserves everlasting death. He may be fully changed, however, to see that sin injures himself and everybody else and that there is no remedy but universal abstinence. Even the devil knows this is true.

The word rendered "repentance" implies a change of opinion in regard to the just outcome of sin. The careless sinner has almost no right ideas about the just punishment of sin. Even if he admits; in theory, that sin deserves eternal death, he does not believe it. If he believed it, it would be impossible for him to remain a careless sinner. He is deceived if he supposes that he honestly holds the opinion that sin deserves the wrath of God forever.

The truly awakened and convicted sinner sees clearly that sin deserves everlasting punishment from God. To him it is simply a matter of fact.

A CHANGE OF HEART

In true repentance there must be a corresponding change of feeling. This change of feeling respects sin in its nature, its functions, its tendencies, and its outcome. The individual who truly repents not only sees sin as detestable, vile, and worthy of abhorrence, but he hates it in his heart. A person may see sin to be hurtful and abominable and still love it, desire it, and cling to it. But when he truly repents, he wholeheartedly abhors and renounces it.

This is the source of those tears of sorrow which sometimes break out when Christians see sin in its true nature. When a believer views sin in relation to God, he feels like weeping. Fountains of sorrow gush forth,

and he wants to get down on his face and pour out a flood of tears over his sin.

When a believer views sin in its tendencies, it awakens a burning desire to stop it and save people from their sins. His heart is set on fire, and he prays with all his might to pull sinners out of hell and save them from the awful consequences of sin. It is as if he saw all the people taking poison that would destroy them. He lifts up his voice and screams, "Beware!"

He has an intellectual conviction that sin deserves everlasting punishment and is amazed that God can forgive him. Instead of thinking it severe or unkind that sinners are sent to hell, he is full of adoring wonder that he is not sent to hell himself. And when he thinks of such a sinner being saved, he feels a sense of gratitude unlike any he has ever known. If your repentance is genuine, you have a conscious change of views and feelings in regard to sin. Can you say this? Do you know that there has been a change in you and that old things are done away and all things have become new?

When repentance is genuine, the prevailing tendency to repeat sin is gone. If you have truly repented, you do not now love sin. You do not now abstain from it through fear or to avoid punishment but because you hate it. Look at the sins you used to practice. How do they appear to you? Do they look pleasant, and would you really love to practice them again if you dared? If you do have the disposition to sin left, you are only convicted. Your opinions of sin may be changed, but if the love of that sin remains, you are still an impenitent sinner.

The Scripture says, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance." Godly sorrow produces a reformation of conduct.. Otherwise it is like saying that repentance produces repentance. But repentance must be a change of mind that produces a change of conduct and ends in salvation. Have you forsaken your sins? Or are you still practicing them? If so, you are still a sinner. You may have changed your mind, but if you have not changed your conduct, it is not godly repentance.

REPENTANCE UNTO SALVATION

Genuine repentance leads to confession and restitution. The thief has not repented while he keeps the money he stole. He may have conviction but no repentance. If he had truly repented, he would go and give back the

money. If you have cheated anyone and do not restore what you have taken; or if you have cheated anyone and do not restore what you have taken; of if you have injured anyone and do not undo the wrong, you have not truly repented.

` True repentance is a permanent change of character and conduct. The text says it is repentance "not to be repented of." True repentance is so deep and fundamental that the man never changes back again. People often quote it as if it read "repentance that does not need to be repented of." But it says, not to be repented of and is so thorough that there is no going back. The love of sin is totally abandoned. Any individual who has truly repented has changed his views and feelings and will not change back to the love of sin. The truly penitent sinner exercises feelings of which he will never repent--"unto salvation." The very reason it ends in salvation is because it will not be repented of.

False repentance is the sorrow of the world: sorrow for sin arising from worldly considerations and motives connected with the present life. At most false repentance has respect for the individuals own happiness in a future world and has no regard for the true nature of sin.

False repentance is not founded on a change of opinion like true repentance. A person may see the evil consequences of sin from a worldly point of view, and it may fill him with anxiety. He may see that it will greatly affect his character or endanger his life. If his secrets were found out, he would be disgraced--this may fill him with fear and distress. People often have this kind of sorrow when some worldly consideration is at the bottom of it.

Selfishness is at the root of false repentance. it may be a strong feeling of regret in the mind of the individual. He sees the evil consequences of his actions, and it makes him miserable or exposes him to the wrath of God. Sin may injure his family, his friends, or himself in time or eternity. All this is pure selfishness.

He may feel remorse of conscience--biting, consuming remorse--and no true repentance. It may extend to deep and dreadful fear of the wrath of God and the pains of hell but be purely selfish. All the while there may be no abhorrence of sin and no feelings of the heart convicted of the infinite evil of sin.

False repentance leaves the feelings unchanged and the disposition to sin in the heart unbroken and unsubdued. The feelings about the nature of sin are not changed, and the individual still feels a desire to sin. He abstains from it not from abhorrence of it but from the dread of its consequences.

The individual who has exercised true repentance is willing to admit that he has repented and that he was a sinner. He who falsely repents resorts to excuses and lying to cover his sins and is ashamed of his repentance. he will cover up his sins by a thousand apologies and excuses, trying to smooth them over and diminish their enormity. If he speaks of his past conduct, he always does it in the softest and most favorable terms.

REPENTANCE UNTO DEATH

False repentance leads to death. it makes people commit one sin to cover up another. Instead of that open-hearted breaking forth of humility and frankness, you see a half-hearted confession that confesses nothing.

Are you ashamed to talk about your sins? If so, then your sorrow is only a worldly sorrow. Often sinners avoid conversation about their sins yet call themselves anxious inquirers, expecting to become Christians. The same kind of sorrow is found in hell. No doubt all those wretched inhabitants of the pit wish to get away from the eye of God. No such sorrow is found among the saints in heaven.

Open, genuine sorrow is consistent with true happiness. The saints are happy, yet have a deep, undisguised remorse for sin. But this worldly sorrow is ashamed of itself and is mean and miserable--its end is death.

The change produced by worldly sorrow extends only to those things of which the individual has been strongly convicted. The heart is not changed. You will see him avoid only those obvious sins about which he has been counseled.

Observe a young convert. If he is deceived, you will find only a partial change in his conduct. He is reformed in certain things, but he continues to practice many wrong things. If you become intimately acquainted with him, you will find him strict and quick-sighted in regard to certain things but far from manifesting a Christian spirit in regard to all sin.

Ordinarily, the change produced by false repentance is temporary even in

those things which are reformed. The individual is continually relapsing into old sins. The disposition to sin is not gone--only checked and restrained by fear. As soon as he has a hope, is attending church, and gets bolstered up so that his fears are relieved, you will see him gradually returning to his old sins.

This was the difficulty with the house of Israel that made them constantly return to idolatry and other sins. They had only worldly sorrow. You see it everywhere in the Church. Individuals are reformed for a time and are taken into a congregation, but then they relapse into their old sins. They call it "getting cold" or backsliding, but the truth is, they always loved sin.

This is the foundation of all those flashed and starts in religion that you see so much of. People are awakened and convicted, but soon they settle down in false security and away they go. Perhaps they may keep their guard and won't be turned out of church; but if the foundations of sin are not broken up, they will return to their old ways.

A true convert's most obsessive sins before conversion are the furthest from them now. He is least likely to fall into his old besetting sin because he abhors it most. But if he is deceived and worldly minded, he always tends toward the same sins. The fountain of sin is not broken up. He has not purged iniquity from his heart but has regarded sin in his heart the whole time.

BONDAGE AND LEGALISM

The change produced by false repentance is not only partial and temporary, it is also forced and constrained. The reformation of one who has true repentance is from the heart. In him the Bible promise is fulfilled. He actually finds that wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace" (Proverbs 3:17). He experiences that the Savior's yoke is easy and His burden is light. He has felt that God's commandments are not grievous but joyous. :"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (Psalm 19:10)

But this spurious kind of repentance is very different: it is a legal repentance, resulting from fear and not love. Selfish repentance is anything but a free, voluntary change from sin to obedience. If you have this kind of repentance, you will find that you are conscious that you

abstain from sin not because you hate it but from other considerations. You are more motivated by forbiddings of conscience or the fear that you will lose your soul, your hope, or your character than from abhorrence of sin or love of God.

Such people always apologize for sin, evade duty, and think there is no great harm in doing as they do. They love their sins. If there is not some scriptural command of God that they dare not resist, they will continue in sin.

This is not so with true repentance. If a thing seems contrary to the great law of love, the person who has true repentance will hate it and avoid it whether he has a direct command from God for it or not. He sees it is contrary to the law of benevolence, and he would no more do it than he would blaspheme God, steal, or commit any other abomination. The man that has true repentance does not need a "thus saith the Lord" to keep him from oppressing his fellowmen.

False repentance leads to self-righteousness. An individual may know that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners and may profess to believe in and rely on Him alone for salvation. But he is actually placing ten times more reliance on his reformation than on Jesus Christ for his salvation. And if he would watch his own heart, he would know it. He may say he expects salvation by Christ, but he is really building a righteousness of his own.

He supposes his worldly sorrow to be true repentance, and he trusts in it. He takes it for granted that Jesus will save him because he has had sorrow on account of his sins, although he is not conscious that he has never felt any resting in Christ. He felt sorrow, then got relief and felt better. Now he expects to be saved by Christ, when his very consciousness will teach him that he has never relied on Him.

The individual who has this kind of sorrow becomes harder in heart in proportion to the number of times that he exercises such sorrow. If he has strong emotions of conviction but his heart is not broken, the fountains of feeling dry up and his heart is more difficult to reach.

A real Christian who has truly repented is different. Every time you bring the truth to him he becomes more easily affected, excited, and broken under God's blessed Word. His heart gets into the habit of going along

with the convictions of this understanding, and he becomes as teachable as a little child.

A HARDENING OF HEART

Churches--or individual members--who have only worldly repentance pass through a revival, get waked up, and then grow cold again. Let this be repeated, and you will find them more and more difficult to be roused. Soon they become as hard as millstone, and nothing can ever rally them to a revival again.

On the other hand, some churches and individuals experience true repentance. Let them go through successive revivals, and you will find them growing more and more tender. When they hear the trumpet blow for a revival, they will glow instantly and be ready for the work.

The distinction between true and false repentance is as broad as between light and darkness. The principle is illustrated in sinners, who after passing through repeated revivals, will scoff and criticize. Although he heavens hang with clouds of mercy over their heads, they reject it. If they don't have true repentance, every fresh excitement hardens the heart and makes them more difficult to be reached by the truth.

Some people are thrown into distress whenever the truth is flashed upon their minds. They may not have as much conviction as the real Christian, but the real Christian is filled with peace at the very time his tears are flowing from conviction of sin. And each repeated season of conviction makes him more and more watchful, tender, and careful, until his conscience becomes so sensitive that the very appearance of evil will offend it. But the other kind of sorrow, which does not lead to true renunciation of sin, leaves the heart harder than before and soon sears the conscience like a hot iron.

False repentance is sure to be repented of. You will soon find these people becoming ashamed of the deep feelings that they had. They do not want to speak of them, and if they do talk of them it is always lightly and coldly. Perhaps they bustled about in time of revival and appeared as busy as anybody. Very likely they were among the extremes in everything that was done. But now the revival is over, and you find them opposed to new measures, changing back, and ashamed of their zeal. In fact, they repent of their repentance!

After they have joined a church, they will be ashamed of their public repentance. When the height of the revival has gone by, they will begin to talk about being "too enthusiastic" and the necessity of being more sober and consistent.

You some times find people who profess to be converted in a revival turning against the very measure, means, and doctrines by which they profess to have been converted. Not so with the true Christian. He is never ashamed of his repentance. The last thing he would ever think of being ashamed of is the excitement he felt in a revival.

Many people have mistaken conviction for conversion and the sorrow of the world for that godly sorrow that "worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of". I am convinced, after years of observation, that this is the reason for the present deplorable state of the Church all over the world.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

Many sinners think it is a great trial to give up their ungodly companions and their sins. If they had true repentance, they would not think it any cross to give up their sins. When I first saw young people becoming Christians and joining the Church, I thought it was a good thing because their souls would be saved and they would get to heaven. But at the time repentance seemed to be a very sorrowful thing. I never dreamed then that these young people could ever be truly happy.

It is very common for people who know that Christianity is good to think they cannot be happy in the Church. They do not understand that true repentance leads to an abhorrence of those things that were formerly loved. Sinners do not see that when their young friends become true Christians sinful amusements are crucified.

People who experience false repentance do not know what it is to enjoy Christianity. They are not cheerful and happy. They are grieved because they have to withdraw from so many things they love or because they have to give so much money. They are in the fire all the time. Instead of rejoicing in every opportunity of self-denial and rejoicing in truth, the plain truth distresses them. Why? Because their hearts do not love to work for God. If they loved to do their duty, every ray of light that broke in upon their minds from heaven would be welcomed and would make them

happier.

Perhaps you think I suppose all true Christians are perfect. There is a radical difference between a backslidden Christian and a hypocrite who has returned to the world. The hypocrite loves the world and enjoys sin when he returns to it. He may have fear, remorse, and apprehension about the loss of character; but, after all, he enjoys sin.

The backslidden Christian is different. He loses his first love, then he falls prey to temptation and enters into sin. But he does not love it. It is always bitter to him, and he feels unhappy and homesick. He has , at the time, no Spirit of God to keep him from sin, but he does not love it. He is unhappy, and he feels like a wretch. He is as different from the hypocrite as can be. He can never again enjoy sin or delight in the pleasures of the world. Never again can he drink iniquity like water. As long as he continues to wander, he is miserable.

Convicted sinners are afraid to pledge themselves to give up their sins. They tell you they can't promise to do it because they are afraid they won't keep the promise. They love sin. The drunkard knows that he loves strong drink. Although he may be constrained to abstain from it, he still craves it. Likewise, the convicted sinner loves sin, and his hold on sin has never been broken--he dares not promise to give it up.

Sinners who have worldly sorrow can now see where the difficulty lies and why they are not converted. Their intellectual views of sin may be such that if their hearts corresponded they would be Christians. Perhaps they think this is true repentance. If they were truly willing to give up all sin, they would not hesitate to pledge themselves to it and have all the world know that they had done it.

If you are willing to give up sin, you are willing to promise to do it and willing to have it known that you have done it. But if you resist conviction and still love your sins, all your convictions will not help you. They will only sink you deeper in hell for resisting them.

Let us pray that this is the evidence that our repentance is genuine: "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a Godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear

in this matter" (2 Corinthians 7:11).

TRUE AND FALSE REPENTANCE

1. True repentance: it involves a change of _____respecting the_____

followed by a_____

2. Feeling is the result of _____.

3. _____, which God requires, must spring from_____

4. One who truly repents looks at his own conduct as_____

5. Sinners don't see why_____

6. Why cannot sinners see why God thinks sin is worthy of everlasting judgment? _____

7. What always precedes true repentance? _____

8. When we see that sin injures ourselves and everybody else, the only remedy is_____

9. Repentance implies _____in regard to_____

10. The sinner does not believe that_____

11. The truly repentant not only sees sin as

_____, _____,

worthy of _____, but he hates_____ .

12. A person may see sin as hurtful and abominable and still_____, _____

_____and _____

13. If your repentance is genuine:

A. You have a conscious change_____

B. The prevailing _____is_____

C. It leads to _____and_____

D. It produces a permanent _____and_____

E. The love of sin is _____

14. False repentance has respect for the individual's own_____

_____and has no regard_____

15. The root of false repentance is _____.

16. False repentance leaves the feelings _____and the disposition to sin in the

heart _____ and_____.

17. One who falsely repents abstains from sin not from _____of it, but from

the_____

18. The change produced by worldly sorrow extends only

19. The change produced by false repentance is_____.

20. The change produced by false repentance is not only _____ and _____,

it is also _____ and_____.

21. False repentance leads to_____

22. Many have mistaken _____for _____

and the _____for that Godly sorrow.

23. Why are so many false repentants grieved? _____

_____.

24. Is there a radical difference between a backslidden Christian and a hypocrite? _____

25. The hypocrite loves_____.

26. The backslider loses his_____, falls prey to_____ falls prey

to_____. and_____. But, he does not_____.

27. Why are convicted sinners afraid to pledge themselves to give up their sins? _____

_____.

28. What do you do when you are willing to give up sin? You do not hesitate to_____

_____and have all the world know that_____.

10. THE DANGER OF DECEPTION
by Charles G. Finney

"He that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much"--Luke 16:10.

Jesus lays down a principle in connection with the parable of the unjust steward: One who is dishonest in small matters is not really honest in anything.

I don't mean that is a person is dishonest in small matters and takes advantage of people that he won't deal openly and honestly in greater matters. Neither do I mean that a man who commits petty theft will necessarily commit highway robbery. One who holds a grudge against a person won't necessarily commit murder. And so on.

What I do mean is that if a man is dishonest in small matters it shows that he is not governed by principle in anything. Real honesty of heart would lead him to act right all the time. If he appears to act honestly in larger things yet acts dishonestly in small matters, he must have other motives than honesty at heart.

MORAL INCONSISTENCY

Many people believe that a person can be honest in great matters and deserve the character of honesty, even though he is dishonest in "little things."

If a supreme regard to the authority of God was the habitual state of his mind, it would be as evident in small matters as well as large. Where the temptation is small, he would be more certain to act conscientiously than in greater matters because there is less to influence him.

What is honesty? If a man has no other motive for acting honestly than mere selfishness, the devil is as honest as he is. Satan is honest with his fellow devils, as far as it is in his interest or policy to be so. Is that honesty? If a man doesn't act honestly from higher motives than this, he is not honest at all; and if he appears to be honest in certain important matters, he has other motives than the honor of or love for God.

Does he love his neighbor as the law of God requires? If he did, he would not defraud him in small things any more than in great. Were the

temptation is small, it cannot be that one who truly loves his neighbor would act dishonestly.

Take the case of Job. Job truly loved God, and he endured much distress before he would say a word that even seemed like complaining to God. When the temptation was overwhelming and he could not see any reason for his affliction, his distress became intolerable. His wife told him to curse God and die, but he would not do it. Instead, he said, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil." (Job 2:10)

Do you suppose Job would have swerved from his integrity in little things or for small temptations? Never. He loved God. And if you find a man who truly loves his neighbor, you will not see him deceiving or defrauding his neighbor for anything.

The Lord has laid down the principle that if a man is dishonest in small matters, he is not strictly honest at all. Many facts appear to contradict this. We see many men who exhibit a great lack of principle in small matters while in larger things they appear to be honorable and even holy. Their conduct in regard to larger matters can be accounted to other principles than honesty of heart. If we can account for their "honesty" on principles of mere selfishness, then they are not really honest at all. Jesus' principles must be consistent, or else He has affirmed a falsehood.

THE DECEPTION OF FEAR

A man may act honestly in larger matters for fear of disgrace. He may know that certain small things about him are not likely to be mentioned in public, and so he may do them. But the fear of disgrace deters him from doing more obvious things because it will disgrace him. What is this but one form of selfishness overbalancing another form? It is still selfishness, not honesty.

A man may fear that honesty will injure his business. He deals honestly in important matters, while in little things he is ready to take advantage of anyone he can. Thus a man will take advantage of a seamstress and pay her less than he knows she deserves for making a garment. The same individual, in buying supplies, wouldn't think of cheating because it would injure his business. In dealing with an abused and humble person, he can gripe and squeeze out a few cents without fear of public disgrace, while

he wouldn't be publicly spoken of as disreputable and base under any circumstances.

Fear of human law may influence a man to act honestly in obvious things, while in such small matters that the law is not likely to notice, he will defraud any time.

The love of praise influences many men to act honestly and even piously in noticeable things. Many men will cheat a poor person out of a few cents in the price of labor, and then, in some great public display, appear to act generously. Why would a man habitually take advantage of everybody and then give hundreds of dollars to charities? He may do it for the love of praise and not the love of God or man.

A man may be afraid of divine wrath if he commits great dishonest acts and still suppose that God will overlook little things and not notice dishonesty in small matters.

Often individuals who act dishonestly in small affairs will act uprightly and honorable to save their character. Many men are looked upon as honorable dealers by their business associates but are well known by intimate acquaintances to be greedy and overreaching in small matters. It is not real honesty of heart that makes him act with apparent honesty in his public transactions.

An individual may habitually entertain unclean thoughts yet never actually commit adultery. He may be restrained by fear or lack of opportunity and not by principle. If he indulges in unclean thoughts, he would certainly act uncleanly if it were not for other reasons than purity of principle.

He may manifest a covetous spirit yet not steal. But he has the spirit that would lead him to steal if not restrained by other reasons than honesty or principle.

A man may be angry, yet never murder anybody. But his hatred would lead him to do it, as far as principle is concerned. If it is not done, it is for other reasons than true principle.

An individual may oppress his fellowman, enslave him, deprive him of instruction, and compel him to labor without compensation for his own benefit, yet not commit murder. But if he will ruin someone's life to gratify his own pride or promote his own interest, it cannot be principle. Neither

love to God or man keeps him from doing anything dishonest.

Anyone who defrauds the United States' treasury of postage would rob the treasury of all its gold if he had the chance. The same motive that led him to do the one would lead him to do the other if he had an opportunity, and if it were not counteracted by some other motive equally selfish.

A man may be guilty of little misrepresentations yet not dare to tell a downright lie. But if he is guilty of coloring the truth to make facts appear other than they really are, he is lying. The individual who does this would manufacture many lies if it were in his interest or he were not restrained by reasons other than a sacred regard to truth.

MAINTAINING FALSE APPEARANCES

Individuals often manifest a lack of principle in regard to the payment of small debts, while they are extremely careful and punctual in paying notes at the bank and in their commercial transactions.

For instance, if a man subscribes to a newspaper and the price is a small sum, he may never pay it. The same man having a debt at the bank would certainly have been punctual. Why? Because if he does not pay, his credit will be injured; but the little debt of five dollars will not be protested. He forgets about it, and the publisher has to send for it or go without his money. Obviously this man does not pay his debts at the bank from honesty or principle but purely from a regard to his own credit and interest.

Some manifest this lack of principle by committing petty theft. If they live in an apartment house, they will steal little things, perhaps light bulbs from the halls. Instead of buying them for himself, he pilfers them one at a time. The individual who does this shows himself to be radically rotten at heart.

I once heard about a similar case. A man was sitting in a room where another gentleman had a tumbler of wine and a pitcher of water. The gentleman stepped out of the room for a moment but accidently left the door ajar. Looking back, he saw the other man drink a part of the wine in the tumbler; then, to conceal it, he filled up the tumbler with water and took his seat. The individual who did this showed that he loved wine and thought nothing of stealing. As far as principle was concerned, he would get drunk if he had the means and steal if he had a chance; at heart he

was both a drunkard and a thief.

People often manifest great dishonesty when they find articles that have been lost, especially articles of small value. One will find a penknife or an umbrella and never make the least inquiry, even among those he has reason to believe were the losers. The man who would do this would keep a checkbook if he should find it. Yet this same individual, if he found five thousand dollars, would advertise it in the newspaper and make a great noise if he knew he'd be found out.

Many individuals conceal little mistakes that are made in their favor, for example, in giving change. If a man would say nothing and let is pass, only opportunity would prevent him from taking any advantage whatever or cheating to any extent.

The real state of a man's heart is often more obvious in small matters than in business or greater importance. Men are often deceived and think that being honest in greater things will prove their honesty of heart, despite their dishonesty in smaller things. They are sure to be on their guard in great things, while they are careless in little mattes and so act out their true character.

SIN IS SIN!

The individual who indulges in any one sin does not abstain from sin because it is sin. If he hated sin and was opposed to it because it was sin, he would no more indulge in one sin than another. If a person goes to pick and choose among sins, avoiding some and practicing others, it is certain that he does not regard the authority of God or hate sin.

The man who will not practice self-denial in little things to promote Christianity would not endure persecution for its sake. Those who will not deny their appetite would not endure the scourge or the stake. If persecution were to arise, some might endure it for the sake of the applause it would bring or to show their spirit. There is a natural spirit of obstinancy often roused by opposition that would rather go to the stake than yield a point. But it is not true love to the cause that prompts a man to endure opposition, if he will not endure self-denial in little things for its sake.

Where you find people wearing great amounts of jewelry from vanity, consider them rotten. Men strut with their fancy designer clothes, and

woman pose in cakes of makeup--it is astonishing how many ways these little things show pride and rottenness of heart.

You say these are little things. I know they are little things, and because they are little things, I mention them. They show a person's character clearly. If their pride was not deeply rooted, they would not show it in little things.

Keep a watch over these little things so you will know your character as it appears to God.

Cultivate strict integrity that will affect small things as well as large. Something beautiful happens when you see an individual acting in little things with careful and conscientious holiness. Until believers cultivate universal honesty, they will always be a reproach to the Lord.

How much would be gained if Christians would display purity and honesty on all occasions and to all people! Sinners often fix their eye on professing Christians' petty offenses. What an everlasting reproach to Jesus!

Of what use is it for a woman to talk to her neighbors about the Lord, when her neighbor knows that she will not hesitate to cheat in petty things? Or why should a merchant talk to his clerks, when they know that however honorable he man be in his public transactions, he is cheap and stingy in little things? It is worse than useless.

11. EXPOSING YOUR INNER SELF
by Charles G. Finney

"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" --2 Corinthians 13:5

We must understand our own hearts and take the proper steps to prove our real characters as they appear to God. Scripture doesn't refer to a trial or proof of our strength or knowledge but our moral character. It implies that we should know how God regards us and what He thinks of us. Does He consider us saints or sinners? We must settle the question definitively for ourselves: Are we heirs of heaven or heirs of hell?

The individual who is uncertain about his real character can have no peace of mind. He may have apathy, but apathy is different from peace. And very few professing Christians, or people who continue to hear the gospel, can have apathy for any length of time or suppress uneasy feelings. I am not speaking of hypocrites, who have seared their consciences. But in regard to others, it is true that they must settle this question in order to enjoy peace of mind.

ANXIETY IS NO VIRTUE

A man who is not truly settled in his mind about his own character is hardly honest. If he professes Christ when he does not honestly believe he is a saint, he is half a hypocrite. When he prays, he always doubts whether his prayers are acceptable to God.

Some people maintain that keeping saints in the dark makes them humble. But one of the most weighty considerations in the universe to keep a believer from dishonoring God is to know that he is a child of God. When a person is in an anxious state of mind, he can have little faith, and his usefulness cannot be extensive until the question is settled.

Many think the question of salvation never can be settled in this world. They make a virtue of their great doubt, which they always have, even if they are Christians. For hundreds of years believers have been looked upon with suspicion unless they were filled with doubts. But I maintain that Christians can test themselves to know their own selves and understand their true character. This is evident from the command in the text, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own

selves." Does God require us to examine and prove ourselves when He knows it is impossible for us to learn our true character?

Consciousness gives the highest possible certainty about the facts that determine our characters. We can and ought to have the same kind of evidence of our state before God that we have of our existence; and that is consciousness. We cannot help having the evidence. Consciousness continually testifies to our state of mind. We only need to notice what consciousness testifies to, and we can settle the question as certainly as we can our own existence.

If men were shut up in dungeons with no opportunity of being influenced by circumstances, they could not be blamed for not knowing themselves. But God has placed them in circumstances to prove them and know what is in their hearts--to know whether they will keep His commandments or not. The things around us produce impressions on our minds and lead us to feel and act in some way. When we see how we feel and how we are inclined to act in particular circumstances, it produces self-knowledge.

God's law is a true standard by which to try our character. We know exactly what His standard is; and, therefore, we have an infallible and invariable rule by which to judge ourselves. We can bring all our feelings and actions and compare them with this standard and know exactly what their true character is in the sight of God. God Himself tries them by the same standard.

WHEN PRIDE BLINDS

Nothing but dishonesty can possible lead us to self-deception. The self-deceived individual is not only careless and negligent but dishonest, or he would not deceive himself. He must be greatly prejudiced by pride and blinded by self-will, or he would have to know that he is not what he professes to be. Many various circumstances call forth the exercises of his mind, and it must be willful blindness. If he never had any opportunities to act, of if circumstances did not call forth his feelings, he might be ignorant. A person who had never seen a beggar might not be able to tell what he thought about beggars. But put him with beggars every day, and he is either blind or dishonest if he doesn't know how he feels about them.

Many wait for evidence to come to them to decide whether they are

Christians or not. They appear to be waiting for certain feelings to come to them. Perhaps they pray earnestly about it and then wait for the feelings to come that will let them know they're saved. Many times they won't do anything until they get this evidence. They sit and wait in vain expectation for the Spirit of God to come and lift them out of the stupor. They may wait until doomsday.

The human mind is so constituted that it will never feel by trying to feel. You can try hard to feel in a particular way. Your efforts to put forth feelings are unphilosophical and absurd. Feeling is always awakened in the mind by the mind's being intensely fixed on some object calculated to awaken feeling. But when the mind is fixed, not upon the object but on direct attempts to put forth feeling, this will not awaken feeling. It is impossible. You may as well shut your eyes and try to see.

When the mind's attention is taken up with looking inward and attempting to examine the nature of the present emotion, that emotion at once ceases to exist; the attention is no longer fixed on the object that causes the emotion. When I hold my hand before a lamp, it casts a shadow; but if I take the lamp away, there is no shadow. If the mind is turned away from the object that awakens emotion, the emotion ceases to exist. The mind must be fixed on the object, not on the emotion, or there will be no emotion and no evidence.

You will never get evidence by spending time in mourning over the state of your heart. Some people spend their time complaining, "Oh, I don't feel; I can't feel; my heart is so hard." What are they doing? Perhaps they are trying to work themselves up into feeling. This is as philosophical as trying to fly!

While they are mourning and thinking about their hard hearts, they are the ridicule of the devil. Suppose a man shut himself outside and then went around complaining how cold he was--children would laugh at him. He would freeze if he shut himself out from the warmth. And all his complaining would not help the matter.

When we concentrate on any object calculated to awaken feeling, it is impossible not to feel. The mind is made so that it must feel. Don't stop and ask, "Do I feel?" If you put your hand near fire, do you need to stop and ask "Do I really feel the sensation of warmth?" You know that you do!

Where the impression is slight, it requires an effort of attention to notice your own consciousness. The passing feeling of the mind may be so slight that it escapes your notice, but it is still real.

THE HORROR OF SIN

If the mind is fixed on an object calculated to excite emotions of any kind., it is impossible not to feel those emotions to some degree. If the mind is intently fixed, it is impossible not to feel the emotions to such a degree that you are conscious of them. These principles show you how we are to discover our characters and know the real state of our feelings toward any object.

Be sure that the things you fix your mind on are realities. A great deal of imaginary religion prevails in the world. People have high feelings--their minds are much excited and the feeling corresponds with the object contemplated. But here is the source of the delusion--the object is imaginary. The feeling is not false or imaginary. It is real feeling and corresponds perfectly with the imaginary object. But the object is fiction. The individual has formed a notion of God, of Jesus Christ, or of salvation that is opposite to the truth. His feelings are correct, but his object is wrong. This is undoubtedly a major source of the false hopes and conversions in the world.

You will not discover the true state of your heart merely by finding in your mind a strong feeling of abhorrence for sin. All intelligent beings disapprove of sin, when viewed abstractly and detached from their own selfish gratification. Even the devil feels it. The devil no more loves sin, when viewed abstractly, than Gabriel. He blames sinners and condemns their conduct; and whenever he has no selfish reason for being pleased at what they do, he abhors it.

A striking difference exists between the natural disapproval of sin, as an abstract thing, and the intense detestation and opposition that is founded on love to God. It is one thing for a young man to feel that a certain act is wrong and quite another thing to view it as an injury to his father. Here is something in addition to his former feelings. He has not only indignation against the act as wrong, but his love for his father produces a feeling of grief. And the individual who loves God feels not only a strong loathing for sin but a feeling of grief and indignation when he views it as committed against God.

If, then, you want to know how you feel toward sin, consider how you feel when you hang around sinner and see them break God's law. When you hear them swear profanely or see them get drunk, how do you feel? Do you feel as the psalmist did when he wrote, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word"? And, "Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." And again, "Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the wicked that forsake thy law" (Psalm 119:158, 136, 53).

Look back on your past sins and see whether you feel as an affectionate child would feel when he remembers how he has disobeyed or dishonored a beloved parent. It is one thing to feel a strong conviction that your former conduct was wicked--and quite another thing to have this feeling attended with grief because you sinned against God.

Most Christians look back on their former conduct toward their parents with deep emotion. In addition to a strong disapproval of their conduct, a deep emotion of grief often overwhelms them accompanied by gushing tears. This is true repentance toward a parent. And repentance toward God is the same thing. If genuine, it will correspond in degree to the intensity of attention with which the mind is fixed on the subject.

EXAMINE YOURSELF

If you want to test your feelings toward impenitent sinners, then converse with them about the state of their souls and warn them. See what they say and discover the state of their hearts, and then you will know how you feel about sinners. Don't shut yourself up in your closet and try to imagine them. You may imagine something that will affect your sympathies and make you week and pray.

Fix your thoughts intently on God. Don't try to imagine a God after your own foolish hearts, but take the Bible and learn who God is. Don't imagine how He looks, but fix your mind on the Bible description of how He feels, what He does, and what He says. Here you will detect the real state of your heart, which you cannot mistake.

You are bound to know whether you love the Lord Jesus Christ or not. Review the circumstances of His life and see whether they appear as realities to your mind--His miracles, sufferings, character, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession at the right hand of the throne

of God. Do you believe all these? What are your feelings in view of them? When you think of His willingness and ability to save, His atoning death, and His power, are these things realities to you? If so, you will have feelings and will be conscious of them.

What are your feelings toward the saints? If you want to test your heart on this point, don't let your thoughts run to the ends of the earth, but fix your mind on the saints near you. Do you love them and desire their holiness? Can you bear them in your heart to the throne of grace in faith and ask God to bestow blessings on them?

What is the state of your feelings toward revivals? Read about them, think of them, fix your mind on them, and you will have feelings that will manifest the state of your heart. The same is true of the unsaved, of drunkards, of the Bible, or any object of concern. The only way to know the state of your heart is to fix your mind on the reality of things until you feel so intensely that there is no mistaking the nature of your feelings.

If you find it difficult to produce feelings about any of these things, either your mind is taken up with the Lord's work and won't allow fixed attention to the specified object, or your thoughts wander with a fool's eye to the ends of the earth. I have known some Christians to be very distressed because they did not feel as intensely as they think they ought to on some subjects. A person's mind may be so taken up with anxiety, labor, and prayer for sinners that it requires an effort to think enough about his own soul to feel deeply. When he hits his knees to pray about his own sins, a sinner comes to mind; and he can hardly pray for himself. Don't regard it as evidence against you if the reason you don't feel is because your mind is engrossed in something equally important.

If your thoughts run all over the world and you don't feel deeply enough to know your true character--if your mind won't come to the Bible and fix on any object of Christian feeling--lay a strong hand on yourself and fix your thoughts with a death-grasp until you do feel. You can command your thoughts: God has put the control of your mind in your own hands. You can control your own feelings by turning your attention upon the object you wish to feel about. Fasten your mind on the subject until the deep foundations of feeling break up on your mind and you understand the state of your heart and your real character in the sight of God.

THE RELIGION OF IMAGINATION

An individual can never know the true state of his heart unless he is active in the Church. Shut up in his prayer closet, he can never tell how he feels toward objects that are outside, and he can never feel right toward them until he goes out and acts. How can he know his real feeling toward sinners if he never brings his mind in contact with sinners? His imagination may make him feel, but his feelings are not produced by a reality.

Individuals shut out from the world of reality and living in worlds of imagination become perfect creatures of imagination. A similar thing happens in Christianity with those who don't bring their mind in contact with reality. They think they love mankind yet do them no good. They imagine they abhor sin but do nothing to destroy it. How many people deceive themselves by exciting their imagination about missions but do nothing to save souls? Women will spend a whole day at a prayer meeting for the conversion of the world, while their impenitent servant in the kitchen is not spoken to all day.

This is all a fiction of the imagination! There is no reality in such "Christianity." If they loved God and man, the pictures drawn by the imagination about the unsaved in other countries would not create any more feeling than the reality around them.

They are surrounded by sinners, and they hear profane oaths and see vices as a naked reality every day. If these produce no feeling, it is vain to pretend that they feel what God feels for sinners in foreign lands or anywhere.

People love to talk about the heathen, but they have never converted a soul at home. If they don't promote revivals at home, where they understand the language and have direct access to their neighbors, how can they be depended upon to promote the work of Jesus on the mission field? The Church must understand this and keep it in mind in selecting men to go on foreign missions. They ought to know that if the reality at home doesn't excite a person to action, the devil will only laugh at a million such missionaries.

The same delusion often manifests itself in regard to revivals. An individual may be a great friend to revivals, but they are always the revivals of former days or revivals that are yet to come. But as to any present revival, he is always aloof and doubtful. He can read about

revivals and pray, "O Lord, revive thy work; O Lord, let us have such revivals when thousand shall be converted in a day."

But get him into the reality of things, and he never sees a revival he can take interest in. He is friendly to the fictitious imaginings of his own mind and can create a state of things that will excite his feelings. But no reality ever brings him out to cooperate in actually promoting a revival.

In the days of our Savior, the people said, and no doubt really believed, that they abhorred the actions of those who persecuted the prophets. They said, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets" (Matthew 23:30). No doubt they wondered that people could be so wicked. But they had never seen a prophet and were moved by their imagination.

When Jesus appeared, the greatest of prophets, on whom all the prophecies centered, they rejected Him and put Him to death with as much cold-hearted cruelty as their fathers killed the prophets. "Fill ye up," said out Savior, "the measure of your fathers. . . . That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth" (Matthew 23:32,35).

In every age men have fallen in love with fictions of their own imaginations, over which they have stumbled into hell.

ILLUMINATING THE PAST

Christianity consists in love, feeling right, doing right, and doing good. If, therefore, you want to be holy, do not think of cultivating holiness that will

never cause it to grow--that is, by withdrawing from contact with mankind. If the Lord thought such circumstances would be favorable to piety, He would have directed them so. But He knew better. He has, therefore, appointed circumstances as they are so that His people may have a thousand objects of benevolence and a thousand opportunities to do good. If they deny themselves and turn their hearts upon these things, they cannot fail to grow in holiness and have increasing evidence.

We can consistently shut ourselves up on our prayer closets in only one department of self examination: that is when we want to look back and calmly examine the motive of our past conduct. In such cases we must limit our thoughts and keep other things from our mind. To do this effectually, it is often necessary to resort to seclusion, fasting, and prayer.

Sometimes it is impossible to vividly remember what we want to examine without association. We attempt to call up past scenes, but everything is confused and dark until we strike upon some associated idea that gradually brings the whole before us.

If I am called as a witness in court, I can sometimes only remember by going to the place. Then all the circumstances come back as though they were yesterday. Similarly, we may find that associated ideas will bring back the feelings we formerly had.

In examining yourselves, be careful to avoid expecting to find all the Christian graces in exercise in your mind at once. This is contrary to the nature of the mind. If you find the exercises of your mind are right, satisfy yourselves with the subject before your mind. Don't draw a wrong inference because some other right emotion isn't present. The mind can have only one train of emotions at a time.

Some Christians always have the happy kind of feelings. Others always feel sad and distressed. They are in almost constant agony for sinners. Their thoughts are directed to different objects. One class always thinks of objects calculated to make them happy; the other thinks of the state of the Church or the state of sinners. They are weighed down with a burden as if they had a mountain on their shoulders. Both may be Christians and both classes of feelings may be right, depending upon the objects they look at.

The apostle Paul had continual heaviness and sorrow of heart on account of his brethren. No doubt he felt right. The case of his brethren, who had rejected the Savior, was the object of his thoughts. The dreadful wrath that they had brought upon themselves and the doom that hung over them was constantly before his mind. How could he be anything but sad?

Show me a joyful, happy Christian, and he is not generally a very useful Christian. Often, he is taken up with enjoying the sweets of religion and does little. Some ministers preach a great deal on these subjects and make their hearers very happy. But such ministers are seldom instrumental in converting many sinners, however much they may have refreshed, edified, and gratified their congregation.

On the other hand, you will find men who are habitually filled with deep

agony of soul in view of the state of sinners, and these men will be largely instrumental in converting men. The reason is plain. Both preached the truth, both preached the gospel--in different proportions--and the feelings awakened corresponded with the views they preached. The difference is that one comforted the saints and the other converted sinners.

DO SOMETHING!

Christians who are always happy are lovely companions, but they are very seldom engaged in pulling sinners out of the fire. Others are always full of agony for sinner, looking at their state and longing to have souls converted. Instead of enjoying the foretaste of heaven on earth, they are sympathizing with the Son of God when He was on earth, groaning in spirit and spending all night in prayer. The real revival spirit is a spirit of agonizing desires and prayer for sinners.

People often wonder why they feel as they do. The answer is plain. You feel so because you think so. You direct your attention to those objects calculated to produce those feelings.

Many pious people dishonor the Lord by their doubts. They perpetually talk about their doubts and conclude that they have no faith. If, instead of dwelling on their doubts, they will fix their minds on others objects--on Jesus for instance--or go out and try to bring sinners to repentance, they will feel right and dissipate their doubts.

Never wait until you feel right before you do this. Perhaps some things that I have said have not been rightly understood. I said you could do nothing for God unless you felt right. Don't infer that you are to sit still and do nothing until you are satisfied that you do feel right.

Place yourself in circumstances that will make you feel right and go to work. On one hand, to bustle about without any feeling is wrong; and on the other hand, to shut yourself up on your closet and wait for feeling to come is also wrong!

Stay active! You will never feel right otherwise. Keep your mind under the influence of objects calculated to create and keep Christian feelings alive.

12. TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

by Charles G. Finney

"Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine, ye shall lie down in sorrow"--Isaiah 50:11

Evidently, Isaiah was addressing those who professed to be religious and who flattered themselves that they were in a state of salvation. But their hope was a fire of their own kindling, and the sparks were created by themselves. This discussion will be of no use except to those who are honest in applying it to themselves. If you will do this, I may be able to lead you to discover your true state and, if you are new deceived, direct you to the true path of salvation.

The natural state of men before conversion is pure, unmingled selfishness. They have no gospel benevolence, Selfishness is supremely regarding one's own happiness and seeking one's own good because it is his own. Selfish men place their own happiness above other interests of greater value, such as the glory of God and the good of the universe. That men, before conversion, are in this state is evident from many considerations.

Every man knows that all other men are selfish. All the dealings of mankind are conducted on this principle. If any man overlooks this and tries to deal with people as if they were not selfish, he will be thought deranged.

Benevolence is choosing the happiness of others. In a converted state, man's character becomes benevolent or loving. An individual who is converted is benevolent and not supremely selfish. This is God's state of mind.

We are told that God is love. Benevolence comprises His whole character. All His moral attributes are only manifestations of His benevolence. A converted person is in this respect like God. I don't mean that no one is converted unless he is as purely and perfectly benevolent as God is. But his prevailing choice is benevolence. He sincerely seeks the good of others for its own sake. By disinterested benevolence I do not mean that a person who is disinterested feels no interest in his object of pursuit. He seeks the happiness of others for their own sake and not for

promoting his own happiness.

God is purely benevolent. He does not make His creatures happy for the sake of promoting His own happiness but because He loves their happiness and chooses it for their own sake. Of course He does feel happy in promoting the happiness of His creatures, but He does not do it for the sake of His own gratification. The disinterested man feels happy in doing good. If he did not love and enjoy doing good, it would not be virtue in him.

Benevolence is holiness. The law of God requires that "Thou shalt love the Lord they God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind....thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matthew 22:37,39). The converted man yields to the law of God; and, as much as he is like God, he is benevolent. It is the leading feature of his character.

True conversion is a change from a state of supreme selfishness to benevolence. It is a change in the end of pursuit and not a mere change in the means of attaining the end. That the converted and the unconverted differ only in the means they use, while both are aiming at the same end, is false. Gabriel and Satan are not both aiming to be happy. The archangel does not obey God for the sake of promoting his own happiness.

MOTIVE AND ACTION

A man may change his means and yet have the same end: his own happiness. He may not believe in Jesus or in eternity and yet may see that doing good will be to his advantage in this world. Suppose, then, that his eyes are opened and he sees the reality of eternity. He may take up religion as a means of happiness in eternity. No virtue lies in this. It is the motive that gives character to the act, not the means employed.

The true and false convert differ in this. The true convert chooses, as the end of his pursuit, the glory of God and the good of His Kingdom. He views this as a greater good than his own happiness. He is not indifferent to his own happiness but prefers God's glory because it is a greater good. He looks on the happiness of every individual according to its real importance, as far as he is capable of valuing it, and chooses the greatest good as his supreme object.

There are ways in which true saints and deceived people agree and ways

in which they differ. They may agree in leading a moral life. The difference is in their motives. The true saint leads a moral life because he loves holiness. The deceived person uses morality as the means to effect his own happiness.

They may be equally prayerful as far as the form of praying is concerned. Again, the difference is in their motives. The true saint loves to pray, while the other prays because he hopes to derive some benefit to himself from praying. The true saint expects a benefit from praying, but that is not his leading motive. The other prays from no other motive.

Both may be equally zealous in religion. One may be zealous because his zeal is according to knowledge, and he sincerely desires and loves to promote Christianity for its own sake. The other may show equal zeal to assure his own salvation or because he is afraid of going to hell if he doesn't work for the Lord. He wants to quiet his conscience and doesn't love Christianity for its own sake.

They may be equally responsible to their duties--the true convert because he loves to work for the Lord and the other because he dares not neglect it.

Both may pay equal regard to what is right--the true convert because he loves what is right and the other because he knows he cannot be saved unless he hoes right. He is honest in his business transactions because it is the only way to secure his own interest. He has the reputation of being honest; but if he has no higher motive, he will have no reward from God.

They may agree in their desire, in many respects. They may agree in their desire to serve God. The true convert serves God because he loves the service of God; and the deceived person serves God for the reward, as the hired servant serves his master.

The true saint desires the conversion of souls because it will glorify God. The deceived person desires the favor of God for personal gain. He will be motivated in this just as he is in giving money. A person can give money to a Bible society or a missionary society from selfish motives alone. He can also desire and work for the conversion of the world from purely selfish motives.

HOLINESS AND SELFISHNESS

Both true and false converts may desire to repent. The true convert abhors sin because it dishonors God. The other desires to repent because he knows that unless he does he will be damned.

They may agree not only in their desires but in their resolutions. Both may resolve to give up sin, obey God, and witness for the Kingdom. They may both resolve it with great strength of purpose but with different motives.

Their designs may be similar. They may both design to glorify God. to convert men, and to extend the Kingdom of Christ. The true saint works from love to God and holiness, and the false convert works for the sake of securing his own happiness. One chooses it as an end, while the other chooses it as a means to promote a selfish end.

Both may design to be truly holy--the true saint because he loves holiness and the deceived person because he knows that he can't be happy any other way.

They may both love the Bible. The true saint loves it because it is God's truth, and he delights in it. The other reads it and applies it to his egocentric hopes.

The true saint loves God because he sees God's character to be supremely lovely and excellent in itself. The other thinks God is his particular friend and is going to make him happy forever. He connects the idea of God with his own interests.

They both may love Christians. The true convert sees in them the image of Christ. The deceived person loves them because they belong to his own denomination or because they are on his side.

They may also agree in hating the same things. They both may hate infidelity and oppose it strenuously--the true saint because it is opposed to God and holiness and the deceived person because it injures his own interests.

The true convert hates sin because it is odious to God, and the deceived person hates it because it is harmful to himself. Many individuals have hated their own sins and yet not forsake them. Often the drunkard looks back at what he once was and abhors alcohol because it has ruined him. And still he continues to drink, although when he looks at the effects, he

feels indignation.

LOVE OF SAINTS AND SINNERS

The true saint graciously opposes sinners and abhors any character or conduct calculated to overthrow the Kingdom of God. The false convert opposes sinners because they contradict his religion.

Both may rejoice in the conversion of souls--the true convert because he has his heart set on it and loves it for its own sake. The deceived person loves it because he thinks he has an advancing concern.

Both the true and false convert may mourn at the lack of zeal in the Church. The true convert is distressed because God is dishonored, and the deceived person grieves because his own soul is not happy.

The true convert enjoys spiritual conversation, but the deceived person hopes to derive some advantage from the saints' company. The first enjoys it because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The latter loves to talk about the great interest he feels in religion and the hope he has of going to heaven.

The true saint delights in worship, prayer, hearing the Word of God, and being in communion with God and His saints. The other thinks a religious meeting supports his special hopes. He may have a hundred reasons for loving meetings, yet not because he loves worship in itself.

While both may find pleasure in prayer, the true saint draws near to God and finds delight in communion with Him. No embarrassments keep him from going right to God. The deceived person finds satisfaction in it because it is his duty to pray in secret, and he feels a self-righteous satisfaction in doing it. He may feel a certain pleasure in it, from a kind of excitement of the mind that he mistakes for communion with God.

They both may love God's law. The true saint loves it because it is excellent, holy, just and good. The other thinks it will make him happy if he loves it.

Although each may consent to the penalty of the law, only the true saint consents to it because he feels it just for God to send him to hell. The deceived person thinks he is in no danger from it. He feels a respect for it because he knows that it is right, and his conscience approves it. But he

has never consented to it in his own case.

They may be equally liberal in giving to charitable organizations. Two men may give equal sums to a worthy cause but from different motives. One would be just as willing to give even if he knew that no other living person would give. The other gives for the credit of it, to quiet his conscience, or because he hopes to purchase the favor of God.

They may be equally self-denying in many things. Self-denial is not confined to true saints. Look at the sacrifices of the Muslims going on pilgrimages to Mecca. Look at the papists going up and down over the sharp stones on their bare knees until they bleed. But we know that this isn't Christianity. The true saint denies himself for the sake of doing more good to others. He is more set on this than on his own indulgence or his own interest. The deceived person may go to equal lengths from purely selfish motives.

Both may be willing to suffer martyrdom. Read the lives of the martyrs, and you will have no doubt that some were willing to suffer from a wrong idea of the rewards of martyrdom. They would seek their own destruction because they thought it was the sure road to eternal life.

In all these cases, the motives of one class contradicts the other. The difference lies in the choice of different ends. One chooses God's interest. For a person to pretend that both these classes aim at the same end is to say that an impenitent sinner is just as unselfish as a real Christian.

WHO AM I?

If these two classes are so similar, then how are we to know our own true character? We know that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. How do we know if we are seeking God's love and His holiness or whether we are seeking God's favor for our own benefit?

If we are truly seeking benevolence and holiness, it will appear in our daily transactions. If selfishness rules our conduct there, as sure as God reigns, we are truly selfish. If we are selfish with men, then we are selfish with God. "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20)

Christianity is not merely love to God but to man also. If our daily

transactions show us to be selfish, we are unconverted. Otherwise, benevolence is not essential to the faith, and a man can be a Christian without loving his neighbor as himself.

If you are disinterested, Christian duties will not be a task to you. You will not labor as if your work were a nuisance. The false convert wouldn't work if he didn't have to. It is a task, and if he takes any pleasure in it, it is for its anticipated results--the support and comfort of his family or the increase of his property.

This is the attitude some people have in regard to Christianity. They act like a sick man taking medicine. They desire its effects, and they know they must have it or die. They would never do it for its own sake. Suppose men love labor like a child loves play. They would do it all day long without any other incentive than pleasure. When Christianity is loved for its own sake, no weariness exists.

If it is a time of general coldness in the church, real converts will still enjoy their own relationship with God. But the deceived person will then invariably be found embracing the world. The, when true saints rise up and shout about their joy so that Christianity begins to revive, the deceived will soon bustle about and appear even more zealous that true saints. He is impelled by convictions and not affections. When there is no public interest, he feels no conviction. But when the church awakes, he is compelled to stir about to keep his conscience quiet. This is only selfishness in another form.

If you are selfish, your joy will depend mainly on the strength of your hopes of heaven and not on your affections. Your enjoyments are not in the employments of Christianity but of a vastly different kind from those of the true saint. They are mostly from anticipating. When you feel very certain about going to heaven, then you enjoy your faith. It depends on your hope and not on your love.

People tell of having no enjoyment in religion when they lose their hopes. The reason is plain. If they loved Christianity for its own sake, their enjoyment would not depend on their hope. A person who loves his job is happy anywhere. And if you loved the employments of Christianity, you would be happy if God put you in hell, provided He let you work for Him there.

Of course, true saints enjoy their hope, but they think very little about it. The deceived person on the contrary, is aware that he does not enjoy his duties. He only enjoys them as a man does who thinks that by hard work he will have great wealth.

The true saint enjoys the peace of God because heaven has already begun in his soul. He not only has the prospect of it, but eternal life has actually begun in him. He has that faith that is the very substance of things hoped for. (See Hebrews 11:1) He knows that heaven has begun in him and that he is not obliged to wait until he dies to taste the joys of eternal life. His enjoyment is in proportion to his holiness and not in proportion to his hope.

THE OBEDIENCE OF LOVE

Another way to tell whether you are selfish in religion is this: the deceived person has only a purpose of obedience while the true saint has a preference of obedience. This is an important distinction, and I fear few people make it. Multitudes have a purpose of obedience but have no true preference of obedience. Preference is actual choice or obedience of heart. Individuals speak of purposing to obey but fail to do it. And they will tell you how difficult it is to execute their purpose.

On the other hand, the true saint prefers and chooses obedience. The one has a purpose to obey, like that which Paul had. Before Paul was converted, he had a strong purpose of obedience, but he did not obey because his heart was not in it. (See Romans 7) The false convert purposes to be holy because he knows that it is the only way to be happy. The true saint chooses holiness for its own sake, and he is holy.

The true convert and the deceived person also differ in their faith. The former has confidence in the character of God that leads him to complete submission to God. Confidence in the Lord's promises depends on knowing God's character.

Human or divine, governments are obeyed on only two principles: fear and confidence. It doesn't matter whether it is the government of a family, a ship, a nation or a universe. All obedience springs from one of these two principles.

In one case, individuals obey from hope of reward and fear of the penalty. In the other, they obey from that confidence in the character of the

government that works by love. One child obeys his parents from confidence. His faith works by love. The other yields an outward obedience from hope and fear. The true convert has faith to obey God because he loves God. This is the obedience of faith.

The other has only partial faith and partial submission. The devil has partial faith. He believes and trembles. (See James 2:19) A person may believe that Christ came to save sinners and submit to him to be saved. But does he submit himself to God's government? No! His submission is only on condition that he be saved. It is never with that unreserved confidence in God's whole character that leads him to say, "Let thy will be done."

He only submits to salvation. His religion is the religion of law. The other is gospel faith. One is selfish, and the other is benevolent. Here lies the true difference between the two classes: One is outward and hypocritical, and the other is that of the heart, holy and acceptable to God.

If you are selfish, you will rejoice in the conversion of sinners only when you have a part in it. You will have very little satisfaction when someone else in involved. The selfish person rejoices when he is active and successful in converting sinners because he thinks he will have a great reward. But instead of delighting in it when done by others, he will be envious.

The true saint sincerely delights and rejoices when sinners are converted by others as mush as if by himself. Some take interest in revival only when they are connected with it. It seems they would rather have sinners remain unconverted than be saved through an evangelist or a minister of another denomination. The true spirit of a child of God is to say, "Send, Lord, whomever you will--only let souls be saved and your name glorified!"

LIVING TO GLORIFY GOD

Regard your own happiness according to its relative value. Put it next to the glory of God and the good of the universe, and then give it the value it deserves. This is precisely what God does. And this is what He means when He commands you to love your neighbor as yourself.

You will in fact promote your own happiness to the degree that you leave it out of view. Your happiness consists mainly in the gratification of

virtuous desires. There may be pleasure in gratifying desires that are selfish, but it is not real happiness. But to be virtuous, your desires must be disinterested.

Suppose a man meets a beggar in the street--cold, hungry, and ready to perish. The man's feelings are touched, and he steps into a store to buy the beggar a loaf of bread. At once the countenance of the beggar lights up with unutterable gratitude. The gratification of the man in the act is in exact proportion to his motives. If he did it solely out of love, his gratification is complete in the act itself. But if he did it partly to have it known that he is a charitable and human person, then his happiness is not complete until the deed is known to others.

Imagine a sinner in his sins. He is very wicked and very wretched. Your compassion is moved, and your lead him to Jesus. If your motive was to obtain honor among men and to secure the favor of God, you are not completely happy until the deed it told. But if your wished purely to save a soul from death, then as you see it done your gratification is complete.

If you aim at doing good for its own sake, then you will be happy to the degree that you do good. But if you do good simply to secure your own happiness, you will fail. You will be like the child pursuing his own shadow: he can never overtake it because it always stays just ahead of him.

Suppose in the case I have mentioned, you have no desire to relieve the beggar but simply crave the applause of a certain individual. You will feel no pleasure at all in the relief of the beggar until that individual hears of it and commends it--then you are gratified. But you are not gratified in the thing itself. Or suppose you aim at the conversion of sinners. If it is not love to sinners that leads you to do it, how can the conversion of sinners make you happy? The truth is that God has made man so he must seek the happiness of others or he cannot be happy.

This is the true reason why men, seeking their own happiness and not the happiness of others, fail. It is always just before them. If they would stop seeking their own happiness and work to do good, they would be happy.

HAPPINESS THROUGH HOLINESS

Christ despised the shame, endured the cross, and regarded the joy set

before Him. But what was the joy set before Him? Not His own salvation or happiness but the great good He would do in the salvation of the world. He was perfectly happy in Himself. The happiness of others was His aim. This was the joy set before Him, and He obtained it.

Where it is said, "We love him because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19), the language plainly suggests two interpretations: either that love to us has provided the way for our return and the influence that us to love Him,. or that we love Him for His favor shown to ourselves. The latter is not the meaning because Jesus Christ fully refuted the principle in His Sermon on the Mount. "If ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?" (Matthew 5:46). If we love God, not for His character but for His favors to us, Jesus Christ call us reprobate.

The Bible speaks of happiness as the result of virtue, but virtue is not the pursuit of one's own happiness. If a person desire the good of others, he will be happy to the degree that he gratifies that desire.

God loves others. He desires everyone's happiness. And to be like Him, we must aim at and delight in His happiness and glory and the honor and glory of the universe.

God requires true repentance--that is, to forsake sin because it is hateful in itself. It is not true repentance to forsake sin on condition of pardon or to say, "I will be sorry for my sins, if you will forgive me." True repentance requires true faith and true submission, not conditional faith or partial submission. This is what the Bible insists.

Many people have different views of the the nature of the gospel. Some view it as a matter of accommodation to mankind in which God has become less strict that He was under the law. This enables them to be fashionable or worldly, and the gospel will come in and make up their deficiencies and save them. The other class views the gospel as a provision of divine benevolence designed to destroy sin and promote holiness. Its whole value consists in its power to make them holy.

From this discussion we can see why some people are much more anxious to convert sinners than to see the Church sanctified and God glorified by the good works of His people. Many feel a natural sympathy for sinners and wish to have them saved from hell. If that is gained, they have no further concern. But true saints are affected by sin because it

dishonors God. And they are even more distressed to see Christians sin because it dishonors God more.

Some people don't seem to care how the people of the Church live if they can only see the work of conversion. They are not anxious to have God honored. It shows that they are not motivated by the love of holiness but by mere compassion for sinners.

TRUE AND FALSE CONVERSION

1. What is man's natural state before conversion? _____

2. SELFISHNESS is_____

3. Selfish men place their own happiness above _____

4. The interests of _____and_____ are of greater_____.

5. Why does every man know that all other men are selfish? _____

6. BENEVOLENCE is_____

7. An individual who is converted is _____and not_____

8. God is love, all His moral attributes are only_____

9. By disinterested benevolence is NOT meant that _____

10. Why does God make His creatures happy? _____

11. The disinterested man feels happy_____

12. BENEVOLENCE is _____.

13. The leading feature of the character of the converted man is_____

14. TRUE CONVERSION is a _____from_____

to _____

15. Do the converted and unconverted aim at the same end?__ _____

16. Can a man change his means but have the same end?_____ _____

17. Why might a man take up religion? _____

18. What gives character to an act? _____

19. The true convert chooses as the end of his pursuit_____

and _____He views this as a_____than his _____.

He prefers_____

because it is_____

20. True benevolence and holiness will appear in _____

21. If we are _____with men, then we are _____with

God. 1 John 4:20

22. If our daily transactions show us to be _____we are_____.

Why?

23. In regard to Christianity, some men act like a _____ taking_____.

They desire_____, and know_____
or die. They would never do it_____

24. In a time of general coldness in the church, real Christians_____

_____. But the deceived person will_____

25. When the church awakes, the deceived person is compelled to_____

26. If you are selfish, your enjoyments are mostly from_____

_____,

27. When does a selfish person enjoy his faith?

28. The true saint enjoys _____because heaven has_____

29. His enjoyment is in proporation to _____not in proportion to his_____

30. The deceived person has only a

_____.

31. On what does confidence in the Lord's promises depend? _____

32. Governments, of any kind, are obeyed on only what 2 principles? _____and_____

In one case, individuals obey from _____and_____ _____. In the other they obey from the_____

33. The one who only submits to salvation, his religion is_____

34. The true difference between true saints and deceived people is: one is_____

and_____, the other is of the_____, _____

35. To regardyour own happiness according to its relative value, put it_____

_____and then _____

36. Your happiness consists mainly in_____

37. To be virtuous, your desires must be_____.

38. If you aim at doing good for its own sake, then you will_____

39. The truth is, God has made man so he must_____

_____.

40. Why do men fail to be happy? _____

41. What was the joy set before Christ? _____

42. Who does Jesus call reprobate? _____

43. To what degree will a person be happy? _____

44. God requires _____, that is, to_____

45. True repentance requires _____and_____

not _____or_____

46. Some view the gospel as a matter of_____

13. TRUE SUBMISSION: A MATTER OF CHOICE
by Charles G. Finney

"Submit yourselves therefore to God"--James 4:7

If you have built your Christian life on a false foundation, your fundamental error was embracing what your thought was the gospel plan of salvation from selfish motives. Your selfish heart was unbroken. This is the source of your delusion, if you are deceived. If your selfishness was subdued, you are not deceived in your hope. If it was not, all your religion is in vain, and your hope is vain.

If any of you have a false hope, you are in danger of reviving your old

ways. Often false converts, after a season of anxiety and self-examination, settle down again on the old foundation. Their habits of mind have become fixed, and it is difficult to break into a new course. It is indispensable, therefore, if you ever intend to get right, that you see clearly that you have up to now been wrong.

True submission to God is not indifference. No two things can be more opposite than indifference and true submission.

Some suppose that true submission includes the idea of being willing to be sinful for the glory of God. But this is a mistake. To be willing to be sinful is itself a sinful state of mind. And to be willing to do anything for the glory of God is to choose not to be sinful. The idea of being sinful for the glory of God is absurd.

BOWING BEFORE GOD'S WILL

If we were now in hell, true submission would require that we would be willing to be punished. Then it would be certain that it was God's will. If we were in a world where no provision was made for the redemption of sinners and where our punishment was therefore inevitable, it would be our duty to be willing to be punished. But as it is, genuine submission does not imply a willingness to be punished. It is not the will of God that all be punished, but His will is that all who truly repent and submit will be saved.

True submission consists in perfect acquiescence in all the dealings of God, whether relating to ourselves, to others, or to the universe. Some people think they submit to the providential government of God. But they find fault with God's arrangements in many things. They wonder why God permitted Adam to sin or why He permitted sin to enter the universe at all? Or why He did this or that? Or why He made this, that, thus, or so? In all these cases, supposing we could find no reason at all that would be satisfactory, true submission implies a perfect acquiescence in whatever He has permitted or done.

True submission implies yielding to the precepts of God's moral law. The general precept of God's moral law is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself" (Luke 10:27). Here we must carefully make the distinction between a formal obedience to God's law

and actual submission to it.

Common sense approves of this law. Every devil in hell approves of it. God has made our minds so that it is impossible to be a moral agent and not approve His law. But this is not the yielding I propose.

True acquiescence to God's moral law includes actual obedience. It is vain for a child to pretend to yield to his father's commands unless he actually obeys them and vain for a citizen to pretend to agree with the laws of the land unless he obeys them. Men have taken their supreme affection from God and His Kingdom and given it to self-interest. Instead of pressing to do good, as God requires, they have adopted the maxim that "charity begins at home." This is the very point in debate between God and the sinner. The sinner aims at promoting his own interest as his supreme object.

The first idea implied in submission is the yielding of this point. We must stop putting our own interest first and let the interests of God and His Kingdom rise in our affections. We must put them as high above our own interests as their real value is greater. The man who does not do this is a rebel against God.

Suppose a civil ruler wanted to promote the general happiness of his nation and wisely made laws to this end. He would require every subject to do the same. Then suppose an individual set up his own private interest in opposition to the general interest. He is a rebel against the government and against all the interest that the government promotes. Then the first idea of submission, on the part of the rebel, is giving up that point and falling in with the ruler and the obedient subjects in promoting the public good.

The law of God absolutely requires that you make your own happiness subordinate to the glory of God and the good of the universe. Until you do this, you are the enemy of God and the universe.

The gospel requires the same as the law. Many maintain that it is right for a man to aim directly at his own salvation and make his own happiness his goal. But God's law requires everyone to prize God's interest supremely. Otherwise, Jesus Christ is the minister of sin and came into the world to take up arms against God's government.

From the Bible, we see that the gospel requires love to God and man, the

same as the law. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). What does that mean? Men have quoted this very text to prove that it is right to seek our own salvation first and to make that the leading object of pursuit. But that is not the meaning. It requires everyone to make the promotion of the Kingdom of God his great object. It means to aim at being holy.

Happiness is connected with holiness but is not the same thing, and to honor and glorify the Lord is a very different thing from seeking our own interests first.

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Indeed! May we eat and drink to please ourselves? No! We may not even gratify our natural appetite for food, except in submission to the glory of God. This is what the gospel requires, for the apostle wrote this to the Church.

Our Savior says, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25). If a man aims at his own interest, he will lose his own interest. If saving his own soul is his supreme object, he will lose it. He must make the good of others his supreme object, or he will be lost.

"There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).

Here some people may stumble and say, "There is a reward held out as a motive." But what are we to do? Forsake self for the sake of a reward to self? No, we must forsake self for the sake of Christ and His gospel, and the consequences will be at stated. This is the important distinction.

TRUE SUBMISSION IS LOVE

In Corinthians 13, Paul gives a full description of disinterested love, or charity, without which a person is nothing. Note how much a person may do and still be nothing: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I

could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

True gospel benevolence is of this character: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

Love has no selfish end but seeks the happiness of others as its great end. Without this kind of benevolence, we know there is not a particle of true Christianity.

Many people wonder why the threatening of the Word of God are given, if it is selfishness to be influenced by fear. Man dreads pain. The Scripture threatening answer many purposes. One is to arrest the selfish mind and lead it to examine reasons to love and obey God. When the Holy Spirit gets the attention, then He rouses the sinner's conscience and challenges him to consider and decide on the reasonableness and duty of submitting to God.

Is it wrong to be influenced by pleasure and pain? No, it is neither right nor wrong. These susceptibilities have no moral character. Suppose you stand on a cliff: if you throw yourself down, you will break your neck. You are warned against it. Now, if you do not regard the warning but throw yourself down and destroy your life, that will be sin. But heeding the warning is no virtue. It is simply a prudential act. There is no virtue in avoiding danger, although it may often be sinful not to avoid it. To resist the wrath of God is sinful. But to be afraid of hell is not holy, no more than the fear of breaking your neck is holy.

We may seek our own happiness with respect to its real value, and we are to do so. He that doesn't do this commits sin.

But no one can be happy while he makes his own happiness his supreme object. Happiness consists in the gratification of virtuous desires. But to be gratified, the thing must be obtained that is desired. To he happy, therefore, the desires that are gratified must be right, and they must be

disinterested desires

Two things are indispensable to true happiness. First, there must be virtuous or righteous desire. If the desire is not virtuous, conscience will oppose it, and gratification will be attended with pain. Secondly, the object must be desired for its own sake, or the gratification will not be complete, even if it is attained.

If the object is desired as a means to an end, the gratification will depend on obtaining the end by this means. But if the thing was desire as an end, obtaining it would produce true gratification. The mind must not desire its own happiness, for in this way it can never be attained. Desires must strive for some other object that is desired for its own sake, and its attainment would result in happiness.

If everyone pursues his own happiness as the ultimate goal, the interests of different individuals will clash and destroy the happiness of all. This is what we see in the world. It is the reason for all the fraud, violence, oppression, and wickedness in earth and hell. As each pursues his own goals, interests clash. The only way to secure our own happiness is to pursue the glory of God and the good of the universe. The question is not whether we should desire and pursue our own happiness at all but whether we should make our own happiness our supreme end.

REBELS IN A HOLY EMPIRE

We are not simply under a government of naked law. This world is a province of God's empire. We have rebelled, and by a new and special provision God offers us mercy. The conditions are that we obey the precepts of the law and submit to the justice of the penalty. God's gospel supplements His government of law.

The gospel requires the same obedience as the law. It requires sinners to yield to the justice of the penalty. If the sinner were under mere law, it would require that he submit to the infliction of the penalty. But man is not and never has been, since the fall, under the government of mere law. He has always known, more or less clearly, that mercy is offered.

It has, therefore, never been required that men be willing to be punished. In this respect, gospel submission differs from legal submission. Under naked law, submission would consist in willingness to be punished. Submission consists in yielding to the justice of the penalty and regarding

himself as deserving the eternal wrath of God.

The duty of every sovereign is to see that all his subjects submit to his government. If every individual obeys perfectly, his laws will promote the public good to the highest possible degree. Then, if anyone refuses to obey, the ruler must force that rebel to serve the public interest in the best way. If he will not serve voluntarily, he should be made to do it involuntarily.

God is a sovereign ruler, and the submission that He requires is exactly what He must require. He would be neglecting His duty as a ruler if He did not require it. If you have refused to obey this requirement, you are bound to throw yourself into His hands for Him to punish you in the way that will best promote the interests of the universe. You have forfeited all claim to the happiness of the universe or the favor of God. God requires that you acknowledge the justice of His law and leave your future entirely and unconditionally at His disposal. You must submit all you have and all you are to Him.

True submission requires complete acceptance of the terms of the gospel. They are repentance, holiness, faith, perfect trust, and confidence toward God. This leads you, without hesitation, to throw body and soul into His hand to do with you as He thinks good.

To receive Christ as mediator, advocate, atoning sacrifice, ruler, teacher--and in all the offices in which He is presented in God's Word--is true submission. This is true acquiescence to God's appointed way of salvation.

The Church is full of false hopes. Many people embrace what they consider the gospel without yielding to the law. They look at the law with dread and regard the gospel as a scheme to get away from the law. These tendencies have always been seen in men. Many hold to the gospel and reject the law, while others accept the law and neglect the gospel. The truth is that the rule of life is the same in both, and both require disinterested benevolence.

If a person thinks that under the gospel he may give up the glory of God as his supreme object and, instead of loving God with all his heart, and soul, and strength, may make his own salvation his supreme object, his hopes are false. He has embraced another gospel--which is no gospel at

all

SUBMISSION UNTO SALVATION

Faith is not believing that you will be saved but believing God's Word concerning His Son. He has revealed the fact that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. What you call faith is more properly hope. The confident expectation that you will be saved is an inference from the act of faith and an inference which you have a right to draw when you are conscious of obeying the law and believing the gospel. When you exercise the feelings required in the law and gospel, you have a right to trust in Christ for your own salvation.

God wills that every soul be saved. That fact exercises disinterested benevolence. Suppose a man came to me and asked, "What must I do to be saved?" and I told him, "If you expect to be saved, you must despair of being saved"--what would he think? What inspired writer ever gave such direction? The answer is, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," "Repent," "Believe the gospel," and so on. Is there anything here that implies despair?

Sinners do despair before they obtain true peace. But what is the reason? Despair is not essential to true peace. Many anxious sinners despair because they get a false impression that they have sinned away their day of grace or that they have committed the unpardonable sin. Sometimes they despair because they know that mercy will be provided as soon as they comply with the terms, but they find all their efforts at true submission vain. They find they are proud and obstinate and cannot consent to the terms of salvation. Perhaps most individuals who do submit come to a point where they give up all as lost. But is that necessary?

Nothing but their own wickedness drives them to despair. They are unwilling to accept God's mercy. Their despair, then, instead of being essential to true submission is inconsistent. No man ever embraced the gospel while in that state. To say despair is essential to true submission is saying that sin is essential to true submission!

Every Christian knows that God desires sinners to be saved. The true ground for salvation is that a man must not seek his own salvation but seek the glory of God.

What did the apostles tell sinners when they asked what they must do to be saved? What did Peter tell them at Pentecost? What did Paul tell the jailer--to repent, forsake their selfishness, and believe the gospel. This is what men must do to be saved.

Another difficulty exists in attempting to convert men in this way. It tries to convert them by the law and sets aside the gospel, trying to make them holy without the appropriate influences. Paul tried this way and found it didn't work. In Romans 7, he gives us the result. It drove him to confess that the law was holy and good, and he ought to obey it. It left him crying, "The good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Romans 7:19). The law was not able to convert him, and he cried out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7:24)

Here the love of God in sending His Son Jesus Christ is presented to his mind, and that did the work. In the next chapter, Paul explains it. "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:3-4). The whole Bible testifies that only the influence of the gospel can bring sinners to obey the law. The law will never do it.

THE FATHER'S BROKEN HEART

The offer of mercy can be perverted, as every good thing can be, and then it can give rise to selfish religion. And God knew it when He revealed the gospel. But nothing is calculated to subdue the rebellious heart of man other than God's mercy.

There was a father who had a stubborn and rebellious son, and he tried to subdue him by chastisement. He loved his son and longed to have him virtuous and obedient. But the child seemed to harden his heart against his repeated efforts. Finally, the poor father was discouraged and burst into a flood of tears. "My son! What can I do? Can I save you? I have done all that I can to save you! What more can I do?"

The son had never yielded to the rod. But when he saw the tears rolling down his father's cheeks and heard his sobs, he, too, burst into tears. He cried out, "Whip me, Father! But don't cry!" The father had hound the way

to subdue that stubborn heart. Instead of holding the iron hand of law over him, he poured out his soul before him. And what was the effect? To crush him into hypocritical submission? No, the rod did that. The gushing tears of his father's love broke him down at once to true submission to his father's will.

The sinner braves the wrath of Almighty God and hardens himself to receive the heaviest bolt of thunder. Then he sees the love of his Heavenly Father's heart. When he sees God manifested in the flesh, stooping to take human nature, hanging on the cross, and pouring out his soul in tears, bloody sweat, and death, his heart melts. He cries out, "Do anything else, and I can bear it; but the love of the blessed Jesus overwhelms me."

To be thus influenced is the very nature of the mind. Instead of being afraid to exhibit the love of God to sinners, this is the only way to make them truly submissive. The law makes hypocrites, but only the gospel can draw souls to truly love God.

TRUE SUBMISSION: A MATTER OF CHOICE

1. If you have built your Christian life on a false foundation, your fundamental error

was

2. With a false hope, you are in danger of_____

3. If you intend to get right, you must see_____

4. TRUE SUBMISSION to God is not_____

5. No two things can be more opposite: _____and_____

6. Some suppose that true submission includes the idea of

being_____

7. To be willing to be _____is itself a_____

8. And to be willing to do anything for the_____

is to choose_____

9. The idea of being _____is_____

10. If we were in a world with no possible redemption, it would be our duty

to_____

11. But as it is, why does genuine submission not imply a willingness to be

punished?

12. TRUE SUBMISSION consists in_____

whether relating_____, _____, or_____

13. TRUE SUBMISSION implies_____

14. Here we must carefully make the distinction between a_____

to _____and_____

15. God has made our minds so that it is _____

and

not_____

16. True acquiescence to God's moral law includes_____

17. What is the very point in debate between God and the sinner? _____

18. What is the first idea implied in submission? _____

19. Who is a rebel against God? _____

20. What does the law of God absolutely require? _____

21. The gospel requires_____

22. Many maintain that it is right_____, and

make_____

23. God's law requires everyone to prize_____

24. What does "Seek ye first the Kingdom of god, and His righteousness require?

25. What is the important distinction regarding Mark 10:29-30? We must_____

26. Love has no _____ end, but seeks_____

27. Without this kind of benevolence, we know_____

28. Why the threatenings of scripture?

29. When the Holy Spirit gets the attention, then He_____

30. To resist the wrath of God is_____

31. Happiness consists in_____

32. For virtuous desires to be gratified, the thing_____

33. To be happy, the desires that are gratified must be _____and must be_____

34. For true happiness: there must be_____. If the desire is

not virtuous _____ and _____.

35. If everyone pursues his own happiness as the ultimate goal, the _____

36. The only way to secure our own happiness is to_____

37. The question is not_____

but,

38. What are the two conditions to receive the offer of god's mercy? _____

_____and_____

39. The gospel requires sinners to yield to_____

40. Submission consists in _____and regarding

41. What is the duty of every sovereign? _____

42. God requires that you acknowledge _____and leave your future

43. TRUE SUBMISSION requires complete_____

44. The truth of the law and the gospel is they both require_____

45. Faith is NOT believing _____

46. Many anxious sinners despair because _____

47. What drives sinners to despair? _____

WHY?

48. Is despair consistent with true submission? _____

49. The true ground for salvation is that a man_____

50. Only what can bring sinners to obey the law? _____

51. Only what is calculated to subdue the rebellious heart of man? _____

52. The law makes_____. Only _____can draw souls to truly obey God.

14. THE PURSUIT OF SELFISHNESS
by Charles G. Finney

"Love.....seeketh not her own"--1 Corinthians 13:5

Charity, or Christian love, "seeketh not her own." The question is not whether it is lawful to have any regard to our own happiness. On the contrary, part of our duty is to regard our own happiness according to its value in the scale with other interests. God has commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves. This plainly makes it a duty to love ourselves and regard our own happiness by the same rule that we regard the happiness or others.

We must regard the promises of God and threatenings of evil as affecting ourselves. But a threat against us is not as important as a threat against a large number of individuals. Imagine a threat of evil against yourself as an individual. This is not as important as if it included your family. Then imagine it extended to the congregation, the state, the nation, or the world. The happiness of an individual, although great, should not be regarded as supreme.

I am a minister. Suppose God says to me, "If you do not do your duty, you will be sent to hell." This is a great evil, and I ought to avoid it. Instead, imagine Him to say, "If your people do not do their duty, they will all be sent to hell. But if you faithfully do your duty, you will save the whole congregation." Is it right for me to be as much influenced by the fear of evil to myself as by the fear of having a whole congregation sent to hell?

GODLY INFLUENCE OR FEAR?

The Bible tells us, "Labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (John 6:27). This teaches that we are not to value earthly interests at all compared to eternal life.

Our Savior says, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matthew 6:20-21).

When Christ sent out His disciples, two by two, to preach and to work

miracles, they came back full of joy and exultation because they found even the devils yielding to their power. "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us." Jesus answered, "Rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:17,20). Here He teaches that it is a greater good to have our names written in heaven than to enjoy great temporal power, even authority over devils themselves.

The Bible teaches preference of eternal good over temporal good. This is different than regarding our own individual interest as the supreme object.

Hope and fear should influence our conduct. But when we are influenced by hope and fear, the things that are hoped or feared should be put into the scale according to their real value in comparison with other interests.

Noah was moved with fear and built the ark. But was it the fear of being drowned himself or the fear for his own personal safety that chiefly moved him? The Bible does not say it. He feared for the safety of his family, and he dreaded the destruction of the whole human race.

Good men are influenced by hope and fear. However, this hope and fear respecting their own personal interest is not the controlling motive. This is not affirmed in the Bible. They must be influenced by promises and threats. Otherwise, they could not obey the second part of the law: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Is supreme regard to our own happiness Christianity? Are we to fear our own damnation more than the damnation of all other men and the dishonor to God? Are we to aim at securing our own happiness more than the happiness of all other men and the glory of God?

All true Christianity consists in being like God--acting on His principles and grounds and having His feelings towards different objects.

BENEVOLENCE AND COMPLACENCY

The Bible tells us that "God is love" (1 John 4:16). Love is the sum total of His character. All His other moral attributes, such as justice, mercy, etc., are only modifications of this love. His love is manifested in two forms. One is benevolence--desiring the happiness of others. The other is complacency--approving the character of others who are holy.

God's benevolence regards all beings who are capable of happiness. This is universal. He exercises the love of complacency toward all holy beings. In other words, God loves His neighbor as Himself. He considers the interests of all beings, according to their relative value, as much as His own. He seeks His own happiness, or glory, as the supreme good--not because it is His own, but because it is the supreme good. The sum total of His happiness, as an infinite being, is greater than the sum total of the happiness of all other beings or of any possible number of finite creatures.

Imagine a man that is kind to animals. This man and his horse fall into the river. Now, does true Christian love require the man to drown himself in order to save his horse? No. It would be true benevolence to save himself. His happiness is of much greater value than that of the horse. But the difference between God and all created beings is infinitely greater than between a man and a horse or between the highest angel and the lowest insect.

God, therefore, regards the happiness of all creatures precisely according to their real value. Unless we do the same, we are not like God. If we are like God, we must regard God's happiness and glory in the same light that He does--as supreme good, beyond everything else in the universe. If we desire our own happiness more than God's happiness, we are unlike God.

To aim supremely at our own happiness is contrary to the Spirit of Christ. We are told that "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Romans 8:9). Jesus, as a man, did not seek His own glory. What was He seeking? Was it His own personal salvation or happiness? No. It was the glory of His Father and the good of the universe through the salvation of men. He came to benefit the Kingdom of God--not to benefit Himself. This was "the joy that was set before Him," for which He "endured the cross, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12:2)

The sum of the gospel is this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself" (Luke 10:27). Benevolence toward God and man is the great requirement. To love the happiness and glory of God above all other things is lovely and desirable and is the supreme good.

Some have objected that it is not our duty to seek the happiness of God because His happiness is already secured. Suppose the king of England is perfectly independent of me and is happy without me. Does that make it less my duty to wish him will, to desire his happiness, and to rejoice in it? Because God is happy, independent of His creatures, should we not love His happiness and rejoice in it?

DYING TO SELF

To seek our own happiness as our supreme end is contrary to the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 13, the apostle begins, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (verses 1-3).

Paul couldn't have expressed the idea that charity (love), or benevolence, is essential to Christianity in stronger language. He lowers his guard on every side and makes it impossible to mistake his views: If a person has no true love, he is nothing.

Paul then shows what the characteristics of this true charity are: "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

Here you see that one leading peculiarity of this love is that charity "seeketh not her own." Many passages plainly teach the same thing. "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it" (Matthew 16:25). An established principle of God's government is that if a person aims supremely at his own interest, he will lose his own interest.

The same principle is taught later in this epistle: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (1 Corinthians 10:24). If you look at the passage, you will see that the word wealth is in italic letters, showing that it was added by the translator and is not in the Greek. They could

have as easily used the word "happiness" or "welfare" as wealth.

Paul also says, "even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Corinthians 10:33). Therefore, to make our own interest our supreme object is as contrary to the gospel as it is to the law.

A supreme regard to our own happiness is not virtue. Men have always known that to serve God and benefit mankind is what is right, and to seek supremely their own personal interest is not right. Consequently, we see how much pain men take to conceal their selfishness and appear benevolent. Unless his conscience is blunted by sin or perverted by false instruction, any man can see that to place his own happiness above more important interests is sinful.

Right reason teaches us to regard all things according to their real value. God does this, and we should do the same. God has given us the ability to reason for the purpose of weighing and comparing the relative value of things. It is a mockery of reason to deny that it teaches us to regard things according the their real value. To aim at and prefer our own interest is contrary to reason.

CHASING AFTER HAPPINESS

Look at the common sense of mankind in regard to what is called patriotism. No man was ever regarded as a true patriot if his object was to observe his own interest. Suppose his object in fighting was to get himself crowned king; would anybody give him credit for patriotism? All men agree that patriotism is when a man fights for his country's sake. The common sense of mankind understands that a reprobate spirit seeks its own things and prefers its own interests to the greater interests of others.

Happiness is the gratification of desire. We must desire something and gain the object we desire. If a man desires his own happiness, the object of his desire will always keep just ahead of him like his shadow. The faster he pursues it, the faster it flies. Happiness is inseparably attached to the attainment of the object desired.

Suppose I desire a thousand dollars. When I get it that desire is gratified and I am happy. But if I desire the thousand dollars for the purpose of getting a watch, a shirt, etc. the desire is not gratified until I get those

things.

But suppose the thing I desired was my own happiness. Getting the thousand dollars does not make me happy because that is not the thing my desire was fixed on. And getting the watch, the shirt, and other things will not make me happy either, for they do not gratify my desire.

God has so constituted things and given such laws to the mind that man can never gain happiness by pursuing it. This very makeup plainly indicates the duty of disinterested benevolence. Indeed, He has made it impossible for them to be happy, except to the degree that they are disinterested.

Imagine two men walking along the street together. They come across a man who has just been run over and lies bleeding by the curb. They pick him up and carry him to the hospital. Their gratification is in proportion to the intensity of their desire for his relief. If one of them felt and cared little about the suffering of the poor man, he would be little gratified. But if his desire to have the man relieved amounted to agony, his gratification would be accordingly.

Suppose a third individual has no desire to relieve the distress man. Helping him would be no gratification to that person. He could pass right by him and watch him die. He is not gratified at all. Therefore, happiness is in proportion to gratified desire.

In order to make the happiness of gratified desire complete, the desire itself must be virtuous. If the desire is selfish, the gratification will be mingled with pain from conflict in the mind.

That all this is true is a matter of consciousness and is proved to us by the very highest kind of testimony we can have. For anyone to deny this is to charge God foolishly as if He had given us a makeup that would not allow us to be happy in obeying Him.

Men may enjoy a certain kind of pleasure that is not true happiness. Pleasure that does not spring from the gratification of a virtuous desire is a delusion. The reason men do not find happiness, when they are all so anxious for it, is that they are seeking it. If they would seek the glory of God and the good of the universe as their supreme end, happiness would pursue them.

If each individual aimed at his own happiness as his chief end, their interests would unavoidably collide. Universal war and confusion would follow the train of universal selfishness.

COMMON SENSE AND CONSCIENCE

To maintain that a supreme regard to our own interest is true Christianity is to contradict the experience of the saints. Every true saint knows that his supreme happiness consists in denying himself and regarding the glory of God and the good of others. If he does not know this, he is not a Christian.

Many people who have had a selfish religion have realized their mistake and come to understand true Christianity. I have know hundreds of such cases, and they testify they know now, by experience, that benevolence is true Christianity.

Every impenitent sinner knows he is aiming supremely at his own interest, and he knows that he doesn't have the truth. The very thing that his conscience condemns him for is that he is regarding his own interest instead of the glory of God.

If a supreme regard to our own interest (because it is our own) is true Christianity, then it will follow that God is not holy. God regards His own happiness because it is the greatest good, not because it is His own. He is love, or benevolence; and if benevolence is not true Christianity, God's nature must be changed.

If a supreme regard to our own happiness is Christianity, then the law should read, "Thou shalt love thyself with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength, and God and thy neighbor infinitely less than thyself."

When we place our happiness first, we must change "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" to "Do all for your own happiness." Instead of "He that will save his life shall lose it," we find it saying, "He that is anxious to save his own life shall save it; but he that is benevolent and willing to lose his life for the good of others, shall lose it."

The consciences of men would be changed to testify in favor of selfishness and condemn everything concerning love.

Right reason would be made not to weigh things according to their relative value but to decide that our own little interest is of more value than the greatest interests of God and the universe.

The human makeup would be reversed. If supreme selfishness is virtue, the human constitution was made wrong. And if Christianity consists in seeking our own happiness as a supreme good, then the more faith a man has the more miserable he is.

The whole framework of society would have to be changed. The public good would be best promoted when every man is scrambling for his own interest regardless of the interests of others.

The experience of the saints would have to be reversed. Instead of finding that the more love they have, the more happiness they have, they would testify that the more they aim at their own good, the more they enjoy the favor of God.

The impenitent would testify that they are supremely happy in supreme selfishness.

I will not pursue this proof any further. It has been fully proven that to aim supremely at our own happiness in inconsistent with Christianity.

SELFISHNESS OR TRUE CHRISTIANITY?

Most men do not know what true happiness is, and they seek it in vain. They do not find it because they are pursuing it. If they would turn around and pursue holiness, then happiness would pursue them. If they would become disinterested and determine to do good, they could not help being happy. If they choose happiness as an end, it flies away from them. True happiness consists in the gratification of virtuous desire; and if they would set themselves to glorify God and do good, they would find it.

Many say, "Who will take care of my happiness if I do not? If I am to care only for my neighbor's interest and neglect my own, none of us will be happy." That would be true if your concern for your neighbor's happiness was a detraction from your own. But if your happiness consists in doing good and promoting the happiness of others, the more you do for others,

the more you promote your own happiness.

It would be selfishness in God if He regarded His own interest supremely because it is His own. Whoever maintains that a supreme regard to our own interest is Christianity maintains that selfishness is Christianity.

If selfishness is virtue, then benevolence is sin. They are direct opposites and cannot both be virtue. For a man to set up his own interest over God's interest is selfishness. If this is virtue, then Jesus Christ departed from the principles of virtue.

Those who regard their own interest as supreme and think they are Christians are deceived. I say it solemnly because I believe it is true, and I would say it if it was the last word I was to speak before going to the judgment. As God is true and your soul is going to the judgment, you do not have the Christianity of the Bible if you are selfish.

Are we to have no regard to our happiness? If so, how are we to decide whether it is supreme or not? You may regard it according to its relative value. Is there any real practical difficulty here? I appeal to your consciousness. If you are honest, you know what your priorities are. Are your interests on one side and God's glory and the good of the universe on the other? Or are they so closely balanced in your mind that you cannot tell which you prefer? It is impossible! If you are not just as conscious that you prefer the glory of God to your own interests as you are that your exist, you may take it for granted that you are all wrong.

CHOOSING TO PURSUE HOLINESS

If you really regard the glory of God and the good of mankind, your enjoyment will not depend on evidence. Those who are purely selfish may enjoy much in religion, but it is by anticipation. The idea of going to heaven is pleasing to them. But those who are purely benevolent have heaven present in their hearts.

Anyone who had no peace and joy in the Lord before they had a hope is deceived. How very different is the experience of a true Christian! His peace does not depend on his hope. True submission and benevolence produce peace and joy independent of hope.

Suppose a prisoner is condemned to be hung the next day. Walking his cell and waiting for dawn, he is in great distress. A messenger comes

with a pardon. He seized the paper, turns it up to the dim light coming through his grate, reads the word pardon, and leaps for joy. He thinks the paper is genuine. Now suppose it turns out that the paper is counterfeit. Suddenly his joy is all gone.

It is the same in the case of a deceived person. He was afraid of going to hell, and of course he rejoices if he believes he is pardoned. If the devil told him so and he believed it, his joy would be just as great as if it were a reality.

True Christian joy does not depend on evidence. The true Christian commits himself into the hands of God with confidence, and that very act gives him peace. He had a terrible conflict with God, but all at once he yields and say, "God will do right, let God's will be done."

Then he begins to pray and melts before God. That very act affords sweet, heavenly joy. Perhaps he has not thought of a hope. He may go for hours or even days, full of joy in God, without thinking of his own salvation. His joy does not depend on believing that he is pardoned but consists in a state of mind, resting in the government of God. In such a state of mind he can not help being happy.

Hope-seekers will always be disappointed. If you run after hope, you will never have a hope good for anything. But if you pursue holiness, then hope, peace, and joy will come naturally. Is your faith the love of holiness, God, and souls? Or is it only a hope? Look at God's whole character and see the reasons why you should love Him. Throw yourself upon Him without reserve and without distrust. Instead of shrinking from Him, come to Him and say, "Father in heaven, you are sovereign and good. I submit to your government and give myself to you--all I have and all I am, body and soul, for time and eternity.

15. RELIGION OR SAVING FAITH
by Charles G. Finney

"What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they

stumbled at the stumblingstone; As it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed" --Romans 9:30-33

In the epistle to the Romans, Paul systematically proves that not only the Gentiles but the Jews were in a state of entire depravity. He then introduces the moral law., explaining it shows that works of the law cannot save man's soul. Sanctification, or holiness, is by faith, and all acceptable obedience is based on faith.

In the eighth and ninth chapters, he introduces the subject of divine sovereignty. Then, in the last part of the ninth chapter, he sums up the whole matter and asks, "What shall we say, then?" The Gentiles, who never thought of the law, had become pious and obtained the holiness which is by faith; but the Jews, attempting it by the law, had entirely failed. Why? Because they made the fatal mistake of attempting to become pious by obeying the law and had come short, while the Gentiles became righteous through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is here called "that stumblingstone" because the Jews were opposed to Him.

The difference between the religion of law and Christianity does not lie in the fact that under the law men were justified by works, without faith. The method of salvation in both covenants has been the same. Sinners were always justified by faith. The Jewish religion pointed to a Savior to come. If men were saved at all, it was by faith in Christ. And sinners now are saved in the same way.

GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT

The gospel has not canceled or set aside the obligations of the moral law. It has set aside the claims of the ceremonial law or law of Moses. The ceremonial law was nothing but a set of types pointing to the Savior and was set aside when the great ante-type appeared.

Many people maintain that the gospel has set aside the moral law so that believers are under no obligation to obey it. Such was the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, who were severly rebuked by Christ (See Rev 2). The Antinomians, in the days of the apostles, believed that they were without any obligation to obey the moral law. They held that Christ's righteousness was imputed to believers. Since He had fulfilled the law for them, they were under no obligation to obey it themselves.

In modern times, Perfectionists have held that they were not under obligation to obey the law. They suppose that Christ has delivered them from the law and given them the Spirit. They believe the leadings of the Spirit are now their rule of life instead of God's law. The Bible says that sin will not have dominion over believers, but these people think the same acts that would be sin if done by an unconverted person are not sin in them.

All such notions are radically wrong. God has no right to give up the moral law. He cannot discharge us from the duty of love to God and love to man, for this is right in itself. Unless God alters the whole moral constitution of the universe to make that right which is wrong, He cannot give up the claims of the moral law. Besides, this doctrine represents Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit as having taken up arms openly against the government of God.

Some people talk about gospel liberty as though they had a new rule of life allowing more liberty than the law. The gospel has provided a new method of justification, but it insists that the rule of life is the same with the law. The very first sentence of the gospel--the command to repent--is in effect a reenactment of the law. It is a command to return to obedience. The idea that the liberty of the gospel differs from the liberty of the law is absurd.

Legalists depend on their own works for justification either by profession or in fact. If they do depend on Christ for salvation, their dependence is a false dependence. They depend on Him, but their faith doesn't work by love, purity the heart, or overcome the world. They have a kind of faith, but not the kind that makes men real Christians and brings them under the terms of the gospel.

LEGAL OBEDIENCE AND LOVE

Several different classes of people have a legal religion. Some profess to depend on their won works for salvation. Such were the Pharisees. I want you to distinguish between works of law and works of faith. This is the main distinction to remember--some works are produced by legal considerations and some are produced by faith.

Two principles can produce obedience to any government. One is the principle of hope and fear, under the influence of conscience. Conscience

points out what is right or wrong, and the individual is induced by hope and fear to obey. The other principle is confidence and love. You see this illustrated in families where one child always obeys from hope and fear and another from affectionate confidence. In the government of God, the only thing that ever produced even the appearance of obedience is one of these two principles.

A multitude of things address our hopes and fears, such as character, interest, heaven and hell, ect. These may produce external obedience or conformity of the law. But filial confidence leads men to obey God from love. This is the only obedience that is acceptable to God. God requires a certain course of conduct, and it should spring from love. There never was and never can be, in the government of God, any acceptable obedience but the obedience of faith. Some people think that faith will be done away with in heaven, as if there will be no occasion to trust God in heaven or no reason to exercise confidence in Him!

Here is the great distinction between the religion of law and Christianity: Legal obedience is influenced by hope and fear and is hypocritical, selfish, outward, and constrained. Gospel obedience is from love and is sincere, free, cheerful, and true. Legalists depend on works of law for justification, defying what they call a principle of right and setting themselves to do right--not out of respect to the law of God or out of love to God but just because it is right.

The religion of law is the religion of purpose or desires founded on legal considerations and not the religion of preference or love to God. The individual intends to put off his sins and purposes to obey God and be religious. His purpose does not grow out of love to God but out of hope and fear. A purpose founded on such considerations is very different from a purpose growing out of love. Christianity is not a mere purpose but an actual preference consisting in love.

Some Legalists depend on Christ, but their dependence is not gospel dependence because the works that it produces are works of law from hope and fear. Gospel dependence may produce the very same outward works, but the motives are radically different. The Legalist drags on a painful, inksome, moral and outwardly religious life. The gospel believer has an affectionate confidence in God that leads him to obey out of love. His obedience is prompted by his own feelings. Instead of being dragged

to duty, he goes to it cheerfully because he love it, and doing it is a delight to his soul.

The Legalists expects to be justified by faith, but he has not learned that he must be sanctified, or set apart, by faith. Modern Legalists do not expect to be justified by works, for they know these are inadequate. They know that the way to be saved is by Christ. But they have no practical belief that justification by faith is only true when men are first sanctified by faith. And, therefore, while they expect to be justified by faith, they perform works that are works of law.

JESUS' YOKE OF LOVE

True Christians and Legalists may agree on the necessity of good works and theoretically in what constitutes good works--that is, obedience springing from love to God. They may agree in aiming to perform good works of this kind. But the difference lies in the different influences that enable them to perform good works. The consideration they expect to affect their minds is different. They look to different sources for motives. The true Christian alone succeeds in actually performing good works. The Legalist, aiming to perform good works, is influenced by hope, fear, and a selfish regard to his own interest. He obeys the voice of conscience because he is afraid to do otherwise and falls entirely short of loving God with all his heart, soul, and strength.

The motives under which the Legalist acts have no tendency to bring him to the obedience of love. The true Christian, on the contrary, appreciates God and perceives and understands His character. In Christ he has such an affectionate confidence in God that he finds it easy to obey from love. The commandments are not grievous. The yoke is easy and the burden light. He finds the ways of wisdom to be ways of pleasantness, and all her paths to be peace. (See Proverbs 3:17)

Is it so with you? Do you feel, in your duties, constrained by love? Are you drawn by such strong cords of love that it would give you more trouble to disobey than to do His will? Do your affections flow out in strong currents to God?

What is the matter with individuals who find it hard to obey and harder still to love? Ask the wife who loves her husband if she finds it hard to try to please him? Suppose she answers, in a solemn tone, "Yes, I find it

hard to obey and harder still to love my husband." What would her husband think?

What would you parents say if you heard one of your children complaining, "I find it hard to obey my father and harder still to love "?

A radical defect lies in the religion of people who love such expressions and live as if they were true. If any of you find serving Jesus a painful thing, you have the religion of law. Did you ever find it painful to do what you love to do? No. It is a pleasure to do it.

Christianity is not labor, it is the feeling of the heart. What would you do in heaven if serving God is such a painful thing here? Suppose you were taken to heaven and obliged to grind out religion every week, month, and year throughout eternity. What sort of heaven would it be to you? Would it be heaven or would it be hell? If you were required to have ten thousand times as much religion as you have here, and your whole life were to be filled up with such duties, wouldn't hell itself be a relief to you?

One class strives to be religious through hope and fear. Under the influence of conscience, they lash themselves if they don't do their duty. The other class acts from love to God and the impulses of their own feelings. They know what the Scripture means: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jeremiah 31:33)

You can see this experience in almost any convicted sinner after he has become truly converted. He was convicted, and the law was brought home to his mind. He struggled to fulfill the law. He was in agony, but then he was filled with joy and glory. Why? He agonized under the law. He has no rest and no satisfaction and tried to please God by keeping the law. He went about in pain, read the Bible, and tried to pray. But the Spirit of God was upon him showing him his sins, and he had no relief. The more he attempted to help himself, the deeper he sank in despair. The whole time his heart was cold and selfish.

New let him be influenced by love to God. The same Holy Spirit is upon him, showing him the same sins that grieved and distress him so before. But now he hits his knees, tears flow like water as he confesses his guilt, and his heart melts. Now he performs the same duties, but what a difference! The Spirit of God has broken his chains, and now he loves

and is filled with joy and peace in believing.

FAITH WORKS BY LOVE

Here is the difference between the slavery of law and the liberty of the gospel. The liberty of the gospel does not consist in being freed from doing what the law requires but in a man's being in such a state of mind that doing it is itself a pleasure. What is the difference between slavery and freedom? The slave serves because he has to do so, but the free man serves from choice. The man who is under the bondage of law serves because conscience thunders in his ears if he does not obey, and he hopes to go to heaven if he is obedient. The man who is in the liberty of the gospel serves because he loves to. One is influenced by selfishness, and the other by selfless love.

If we believe the words and actions of most professing Christians, they have made a mistake and have the religion of law. They are not constrained by the love of Christ but moved by hopes, fears, and the commandments of God. They have gone no further than to be convicted sinners. I have witnessed the regeneration of so many false converts that I fear great multitudes in the Church are still under the law. Although they profess to depend on Christ for salvation, their faith does not work by love.

Some people are all faith, without works. These are Antinomians. Others are all works and no faith. These are Legalists. In all ages of the Church, men have inclined first to one of these extremes and then over to the other. Sometimes they pretend to be all faith, awaiting God's time. Then they get zealous about works, without regard to the motive from which they act.

The true character of these false converts is to cry out, "Legality!" as soon as they are challenged with holiness. When I first began to preach, I found this spirit in many places. The moment Christians were urged to work, the cry would rise, "This is legal preaching. Preach the gospel; salvation if by faith, not by works; you ought to comfort the saints, not distress them." All this was nothing but rank Antinomianism.

On the other hand, the same people now complain if you preach the true nature of gospel faith. Now they want to do something and insist that no preaching is good unless it stirs them up to good works, They are all for

doing, doing, doing and will be dissatisfied with preaching that discriminates between true and false faith and urges obedience of the heart out of love to God. The Antinomians wait for God to produce right feelings in them. The Legalists want to get right feelings by going to work.

Going to work is the way, when the Church feels right, to bring about right feelings. But to dash right out into work without any regard to the motives of the heart is not the way to get right feelings in the first place.

Real Christians are a stumbling block to both parties--to those who wait for God's time and do nothing and to those who bustle about with no faith. The true Christian acts under love to God and his fellowmen, and he labors to pull sinners out of the fire with earnestness.

If the Church is awakened and has the spirit of prayer and zeal for the conversion of sinners, there will be some who sit still and complain that the Church is depending on its own strength. Others will be very busy and noisy but without any feeling. The third class will be so full of love and compassion to sinners that they can hardly eat or sleep, yet so humble and tender that you would imagine they felt themselves to be nothing. The Legalist, with his dry zeal, makes a great noise, deceives himself, and thinks he is acting just like a Christian. The true Christian is stirring and active in the service of Christ but moves with the holy fire that burns within his own bosom.

Some people's religion is steady and uniform while that of others is fitful and unstable. You will find some individuals always excited about Jesus. Talk to them any time, and their souls will kindle. Others are awake only now and then. Once in a while, you may find them full of zeal. When one has the anointing that abides, he has something that is durable. But if his religion is only that of the law, he will have only as much of it as he has of conviction at the present moment.

Some are anxious to get to heaven, while others are happy here. True Christians have a love for souls. They have such a desire to have Christ's Kingdom built up on earth that they are perfectly happy to live and labor for God as long as He chooses to have them. If they were sent to hell and permitted to labor there for souls, they would be happy. Others talk as if people weren't meant to enjoy life; but when they get to heaven, they expect to be happy. They have no enjoyment except in hope. The other already has the reality, the very substance of heaven begun in the

soul.

What kind of Christianity do you have? True Christianity is always the same and consists in disinterested love to God and man. Does this describe you? Does your faith consist of the pursuit of happiness as the great end? There is no condemnation in true Christianity. But if any man doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.

Please don't make a mistake and go down to hell with a lie in your right hand because you have the religion of the law. The Jews failed here, while the Gentiles attained true holiness by the gospel. How many are deceived, acting under legal considerations, while they know nothing of true Christianity?

RELIGION OR SAVING FAITH

1. Sanctification or holiness is by _____and

2. The difference between the religion of law and Christianity does not _____

3. The gospel has not _____This _____.

It HAS

4. Many people maintain that

5. This was the doctrine of the

6. Antinomians believed

7. Perfectionists hold they are not _____

8. They believe the leading of _____

.

9. God has no right _____

10. These people think _____

11. God cannot give up the claims of_____

unless He alters the whole _____

12. This doctrine represents _____

13. The command to _____ is a command to return

to

14. The idea that the _____

differs

from _____ is _____.

15. Legalists have a kind of _____

but not the kind _____

16. One principle that produces obedience to any government is that of _____

and _____, under the _____.

17. The other principle is _____ and _____.

18. God requires a certain course of action and it should _____

19. The only acceptable obedience to God is the obedience of _____

20. Legal obedience is _____ and is

Gospel obedience is _____

21. Legalists set themselves to do right, not _____

or _____ but just because _____ .

22. The religion of law is the religion of _____

and not the _____

23. Christianity is not a mere _____

but an _____

24. Gospel dependence may produce some outward works (like legalists),

but _____

25. Legalists expect to be _____, but he has not _____

26. The legalist, aiming to perform good works, is _____ .

27. He obeys the voice of _____

28. If any of you find _____, you have the _____

29. Did you ever find it painful to do _____ _____

30. The liberty of the gospel does not _____ _____ but in _____.

31. The slave serves because _____

The free man serves from _____

32. The man under bondage of law serves _____ , the man in liberty serves _____

33. One is influenced by

_____,
the other by

34. By the words and actions of most professing Christians, they have _____

35. They have gone no further than to be _____
36. Although convicted sinners profess to _____,
their faith

37. Antinomians are

Legalists are

38. Some pretend to be all faith, _____
Then they get zealous about works, without _____

39. When challenged with holiness, these false converts cry out _____

40. Describe RANK Antinomianism "_____

41. On the other hand, they are all for _____

and will be _____.

42. Antinomians wait for _____

Legalists want _____

43. Real Christians are a _____.

44. If the Church is awakened, some will _____.

Others will _____

The True convert will be so full _____

45. If one's religion is only that of the law, he will have only as much zeal as he has

16. JUSTIFICATION: A ROYAL PARDON
by Charles G. Finney

"Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified"--Galatians 2:16

In its general sense, legal justification means "not guilty." To justify an individual in this sense is to declare that he is not guilty of any breach of

the law. It affirms that he has committed no crime and pronounces him innocent.

More technically, it is a form of pleading to a charge of crime. The individual who is charged admits the fact but brings forward an excuse, on which he claims that he had a right to do as he did. Thus, if a person is charged with murder, the plea of justification admits that he killed the man but alleges either that it was done in self-defense or that is was by unavoidable accident. In either case, the plea of justification admits the fact but denies the guilt.

By the deeds of the law "there shall no flesh be justified." This is true under either form of justification.

Under the first, or general form of justification, the burden of proof is on the accuser. In this case, he only needs to prove that a crime has been committed once. If it is proved once, the individual is guilty. He cannot be justified, in this way, by the law. He is found guilty. To argue that he has done more good than harm or that he has kept God's law longer than he has broken it is not valid. To be justified in this way he must prove that he has fulfilled every jot and tittle of the law. Who can be justified by the law in this way? No one.

In the second, or technical form of justification, the burden of proof lies on him who makes the plea. He admits the fact alleged and must either make good his excuse or fail. Two points are to be regarded. The pleaded excuse must be true, and it must be a good and sufficient excuse, not a frivolous apology that does not meet the case. If it is not true or is insufficient, and especially if it reflects on the court or government, it will only harm him further.

THE NATURE OF SIN

Sinners often plead their sinful nature as a justification. This excuse is a good one, if it is true. If it is true, as they maintain, that God has given them a nature that is itself sinful, then it is a good excuse for sin. In the face of heaven and earth, and at the day of judgment, this will be a good plea in justification. God must annihilate the reason of all rational beings in the universe before they will ever blame you for sin if God made you sin or if He gave you a nature that is itself sinful.

How can your nature be sinful? What is sin? Sin is a transgression of the

law. Does the law say you must not have the nature that you have? This is absurd.

This doctrine overlooks the distinction between sin and the occasion of sin. The bodily appetites and tendencies of body and mind, when strongly excited, become the occasions of sin.

So it was with Adam. No one will say that Adam had a sinful nature. But he had, by his constitution, an appetite for food and a desire for knowledge. These were not sinful but were as God made them. They were necessary to fit him to live in this world as a subject of God's moral government. But being strongly excited led to indulgence, and thus became the occasions of his sinning against God. These tendencies were innocent in themselves, but he yielded to them in a sinful manner, and that was his sin.

When the sinner talks about his sinful nature as a justification, he confounds these innocent appetites and susceptibilities with sin itself. By so doing, he in fact charges God and accuses Him of giving him a sinful nature. In fact, his nature is essential to moral agency. God has made it as well as it could be made, perfectly adapted to the circumstances in which man lives. Man's nature is as well fitted to love and obey God as to hate and disobey Him. The day is not distant when it will be known whether this is a good excuse or not. Then you will see whether you can face your Maker in this way--when He charges you with sin, will you turn around and throw the blame back upon Him?

Do you wonder what influence Adam's sin has had in producing the sin of his posterity? It has subjected them to aggravated temptation but has by no means rendered their nature in itself sinful.

UNABLE TO OBEY?

Another excuse in inability. This also is a good excuse if it is true. If sinners are really unable to obey God, this is a good plea in justification. When you are charged with not obeying the laws of God, you have only to show that God has required what you were not able to perform, and the whole intelligent universe will resound with the verdict of "not guilty." If you don't have natural power to obey God, they must give this verdict or cease to be reasonable beings. A law of reason states that no being is obliged to do what he has no power to do.

Suppose God required you to undo something that you have done. This is a natural impossibility. Are you to blame for not doing so? God requires repentance of past sins--not that you should undo them.

Suppose it was your duty to warn a certain individual about his sin, but now he is dead. Are you still under obligation to warn that individual? No. That is an impossibility. All that God can now require is that you repent. God may hold you responsible for not doing it when it was in your power, but it would be absurd to make it you duty to do what is impossible.

If God requires you to do what you have no power to do, it is tyranny. What God requires is on penalty of eternal death. He threatens an infinite penalty for not doing what you cannot do, and so He is an infinite tyrant. This plea, then, charges God with infinite tyranny and is not only insufficient for the sinner's justification but is a horrible aggravation of his offense.

Let's vary the case a little. Suppose God requires you to repent for failing to do what you never had natural ability to do. You must either repent, then, of not doing what you were powerless to do, or you must go to hell. You can neither repent of this, nor can He make you repent of it.

What is repentance? It is to blame yourself and justify God. But without power, you can do neither. It is a natural impossibility that a rational being should ever blame himself for not doing what he knows he couldn't do. And you cannot justify God.

Suppose God required you to repent for not flying. By what process can He make you blame yourself for not flying when you are conscious that you have no wings or power to fly? If He could cheat you into the belief that you had the power and make you believe a lie, then you might repent. But what sort of way is that for God to act with His creatures?

What do you mean by bringing up such an excuse? Do you mean that you have never sinned? It is a strange contradiction when you admit that you ought to repent but say you have no power to repent. You ought to stand your ground one way or the other. If you mean to rely on this excuse, come out with it in full, take your ground before God, and say, "Lord, I am not going to repent at all--I am not under any obligation to repent, for I don't have the power to obey the law. Therefore, I plead not guilty, for I have never sinned!"

Another excuse sinners offer for their conduct is their wicked heart. This excuse is true, but it is not sufficient. The first two that I mentioned would have been good if they had been true, but they were false. This is true but is no excuse.

What is a wicked heart? It is not the bodily organ we call the heart but the affection of the soul, the wicked disposition, the wicked feelings, and the actings of the mind. If these will justify you, they will justify the devil himself. Has he not as wicked a heart as you have?

Suppose you had committed murder and were put on trial and offered this plea: "It is true," you would say, "I killed the man. But then I have such a thirst for blood and such a hatred of mankind that I cannot help committing murder whenever I have an opportunity."

"Horrible!" the judge would exclaim. "Put him in jail and throw away the key!" Such is the sinner's plea of a wicked heart in justification of sin. God will condemn you out of your own mouth. (See Job 9:20.)

SHIFTING THE BLAME

People often excuse themselves by pointing to the conduct of Christians. Ask a man why he doesn't believe, and he will point to the conduct of Christians as his excuse. "These Christians," he will say, "are no better than anybody else. When I see them practice what they preach, then I will think about it." He is hiding behind the sins of Christians. He shows that he knows how Christians ought to live and cannot plead his sin through ignorance.

But does it amount to grounds for justification? I admit that Christians behave very badly and do much that is contrary to their faith. But is that a good excuse for you? Far from it. This is itself one of the strongest reasons why you should be saved. You know how Christians ought to live and should be an example. If you had followed them ignorantly, or didn't know any better, it would be a different case. But your plea shows that you know they are wrong and is the very reason you ought to exert a better influence than they do. Instead of following them and doing wrong because they do, you ought to rebuke them, pray for them, and try to lead them in a better way.

This excuse, then, is true but not good for justification. You only make it an excuse for charging God foolishly. Instead of clearing yourself, you

only add dreadful, damning guilt.

Who can be justified by the law? Who has kept it? Who has a good excuse for breaking it? Who will dare go to God and face his Maker with such apologies?

DID JESUS OBEY FOR US?

Gospel justification is not the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. Under the gospel, sinners are not justified by having the obedience of Jesus Christ set down to their account as if He had obeyed the law for them or in their stead. People often suppose that they are accounted righteous in the eye of the law by having the obedience or righteousness of Christ imputed to them.

This idea is absurd and impossible for this reason: Jesus Christ was bound to obey the law for Himself. It was His duty to love the Lord His God with all His heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love His neighbor as Himself. If He had not done so, it would have been sin.

The only work He could perform for us was to submit to sufferings He did not deserve. This is called His "obedience unto death," and this is placed on our account. But if His obedience of the law is placed on our account, why are we called to repent and obey the law ourselves?

Does God exact triple service--first to have the law obeyed for us, then that Jesus must suffer the penalty for us, and then that we must repent and obey ourselves? No such thing is demanded! It is not required that the obedience of another should be imputed to us. All we owe is perpetual obedience to the law of benevolence. For this there can be no substitute. If we fail, we must endure the penalty or receive a free pardon.

Justification by faith does not mean that faith is accepted as a substitute for personal holiness or that faith is imputed to us instead of personal obedience to the law.

Some people think justification implies that personal holiness is set aside and God arbitrarily gets rid of the law and imputes faith as a substitute. But this is not the way. Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness, worked by love, and produced holiness. Justifying faith is holiness and produces holiness of heart and life. It is imputed to the believer as holiness not instead of holiness.

FAITH WORKS BY LOVE

Some suppose that justification by faith is without regard to good works or holiness. They have understood this from what Paul said when he insisted so vehemently on justification by faith. But it must be remembered that Paul was combating the error of the Jews, who expected to be justified by obeying the law. In opposition to this error, Paul insists that justification is by faith, without works of law. He does not mean that good works are unnecessary to justification. Works of law are not good works because they spring from legal considerations, hope, and fear and not from faith that works by love.

Since a false theory had crept into the Church on the other side, James took up the matter and showed them that they had misunderstood Paul. To show this, he took the case of Abraham: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he had offered Isaac his son upon the alter? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. You see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:21-24).

This epistle was thought to contradict Paul, and some of the ancient churches rejected it on that account. But they overlooked the fact that Paul was speaking of one kind of works and James of another. Paul was speaking of works performed from legal motives. But everywhere he insists that good works springing from the righteousness of faith are indispensable to salvation. All that he denies is that works of law grounded on legal motives have anything to do with the matter of justification.

James taught the same thing when he said that men are justified not by works or by faith alone but by faith together with the works of faith. Or, as Paul expressed it, faith works by love. Please remember that I am speaking of gospel justification, which is very different form legal justification.

Gospel justification, or justification by faith, consists in pardon and acceptance by God. When we say that men are justified by faith and holiness, we do not mean that they are accepted on the ground of law. But they are treated as if they were righteous on account of their faith.

This is the method that God takes in justifying a sinner. Not that faith is the foundation of justification, because the foundation is in Christ. But this is the manner in which sinners are pardoned, accepted, and justified. If they repent, believe, and become holy, their past sins will be forgiven for Jesus' sake.

Justification under the gospel differs from justification under the law. Legal justification is a declaration of actual innocence and freedom from blame. Gospel justification is pardon and acceptance, as if he were righteous, but on grounds other than his own obedience. When the apostle says, "By works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16), he uses justification in a strictly legal sense. But when he speaks of justification by faith, he speaks not of legal justification but of a person being treated as if he were righteous.

RESTORED TO SONSHIP

When an individual is pardoned, the penalty of the law is released. The first effect of a pardon is to set aside the execution of the penalty. It admits that the penalty was deserved but sets it aside. Then, as far as punishment is concerned, the individual has no more to fear from the law than if he had never transgressed. He is entirely released. People justified by true faith, as soon as they are pardoned, need no more be influenced by fear of punishment. The penalty is set aside as if it had never been incurred.

The next effect of pardon is to remove all the debts acquired as a consequence of transgression. A real pardon removes all these and restores the individual back to where he was before he transgressed. Under the government of God, the pardoned sinner is restored to the favor of God. He is brought back into a new relationship and stands before God and is treated by Him, as far as the law is concerned, as if he were innocent. It does not suppose or declare him to be really innocent, but the pardon restores him to the same state as if he were.

Another operation of pardon under God's government is that the individual is restored to sonship. In other words, it brings him into such a relationship to God that he is received and treated as a child of God.

Suppose the son of a king had committed murder and was condemned to die. A pardon would not only deliver him from death but would restore

him to his place in the family. God's children have all gone astray and entered in to the service of the devil. But the moment they are pardoned, they receive a spirit of adoption, are sealed heirs of God, and are restored to all the privileges of children of God.

Justification secures all needed grace to rescue themselves fully out of the snare of the devil and the innumerable sinful entanglements. If God were merely to pardon you and then leave you to get out of sin by yourselves, of what use would your pardon be to you? Imagine a child who runs away from his father's house, wanders into a forest, and falls into a deep pit. When the father finds him, he cannot merely pardon the child for running away. He must lift him from the pit and lead him out of the forest.

In the scheme of redemption, whatever help you need is guaranteed, if you believe. If God undertakes to save you, He pledges all the light, grace, and help that are necessary to break the chains of Satan and the entanglements of sin; and He leads you back to your Father's house.

SALVATION THROUGH RELATIONSHIP

When individuals are first broken under a sense of sin and their hearts gush out with tenderness, they look over their past lives and feel condemned. They see that it is all wrong, break down at God's feet, and give themselves to Jesus Christ. They rejoice greatly in the idea that they are through with sin.

But soon they begin to feel the pressure of old habits and former influences. Often they become discouraged when they see what must be overcome. If God has saved you, you only have to keep near to Him, and He will carry you through. You don't have to fear your enemies. Though the heavens thunder, the earth rocks, and the elements melt, you need not tremble or fear. God is for you, and who can be against you? (See Romans 8:31.) "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans 8:34).

Justification enlists the divine attributes in your favor as much as if you had never sinned. Imagine a holy angel, sent on an errand of love to some distant part of the universe. God's eye follows him. If He sees that angel likely to be injured in any way, all the divine attributes will at once

protect and sustain him. Just as absolutely, they are all pledged for your protection, support, and salvation. Although you are not free from remaining sin and are totally unworthy of God's love, yet if you are truly justified, the only wise and eternal God is pledged for your salvation. Will you tremble and be faint-hearted with such support?

If a human government pardons a criminal, it is then pledged to protect him as a subject--as much as if he had never committed a crime. So it is when God justifies a sinner. The apostle Paul says, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God" (Romans 5:1). God is on his side, pledged as his faithful and eternal friend.

Gospel justification differs from legal justification in this respect: If the law justifies an individual, it holds only as long as he remains innocent. If he transgresses again, his former justification won't help. But when the gospel justifies a sinner, it is not so: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1).

A new relationship is now in effect. The sinner is brought out from under the covenant of works and placed under the covenant of grace. He no longer retains God's favor by absolute and sinless obedience. If he sins, he is not thrust back again under the law but receives the benefit of the new covenant. If he is justified by faith--and so made a child of God--he receives the treatment of a child and is corrected, chastised, humbled, and brought back again.

JUSTIFICATION: A ROYAL PARDON

1. Legal justification means _____

2. To justify a person in a legal sense is to _____.

3. More technically, justification is a form of _____.

4. In the pleas of justification, the individual who is charged _____

but brings _____

5. The pleas of justification _____

but _____.

6. Under the general form of justification, the _____ .

7. He needs to prove that _____

.

8. To argue that he has done _____

is not valid.

9. To be justified in this way, he must _____.

Who can be justified by the law in this way? _____ .

10. In the technical form of justification, the _____

_____.

11. He admits _____

and must _____

12. The pleaded excuse must be _____,

and it must be _____

not a _____.

13. If it is not _____ or is _____, and especially if it

_____, it will only harm him further.

14. The first plea sinners often offer as a justification is their _____ .

15. When would this be a good excuse? _____.

16. What is sin? Sin is _____

Does the law say you _____?

_____.

17. The sinful nature doctrine overlooks the distinction between _____.

18. What becomes the occasions of sin? _____

_____.

19. Adam had, by his constitution, _____

and a _____.

20. What was Adam's sin? _____

21. By confounding innocent appetites with sin itself, the sinner, by so doing, in fact

22. Man's nature is as well _____

_____.

23. Adam's sin has subjected his posterity to _____

_____, but by no means _____.

24. A second excuse as a justification is _____.

25. This is a good excuse if it _____.

26. A law of reason states that no _____

_____.

17. RECONCILIATION: A COVENANT OF GRACE
by Charles G. Finney

"The gifts and calling of God are without repentance"--Romans 1:29

The meaning of this Scripture is not that God calls and saved the sinner without his repenting but that God never changes His mind once He undertakes the salvation of a soul.

Some think teaching that believers are perpetually justified is a dangerous doctrine because it will encourage men to sin! If you tell a man that has truly repented that God will give him victory over sin, will that encourage him to commit sin?

If this doctrine inspires any man to commit sin, it only shows that he never did repent. He never hated sin or loved God for His own sake; he only pretended to repent. If he loved God, it was only a selfish love, because he thought God was going to do him a favor. If he truly hated sin, his heart would break in godly sorrow when he considered that despite all his unworthiness God had received him as a child.

How often the child of God has melted in adoring wonder at the goodness of God, who saved him instead of sending him to hell as he deserved! What would bring him lower in the dust than the thought that, after all God had done for him, he could wander away again when his name was written in the Lamb's book of life!

OUR LOVING FATHER'S ROD

God has promised that if anyone belonging to Christ goes astray, He will use the discipline of the covenant to bring him back. In Psalm 89, God, substituting David for Christ, says, "If his children forsake my laws, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statues, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the things that is gone out of my lips" (Psalm 89:30-34).

Thus, Christians may always expect to be more readily visited with God's judgments if they go astray than the impenitent. The sinner may grow fat and live in riches, all according to God's established principles of

government. But let a child of God forsake his God and go after any worldly object and, as certain as he is a child, God will smite him with His rod. When he has been brought back, he will say with the psalmist, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted: that I might learn thy statutes. . . Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word" (Psalm 119:71,67). Perhaps some of you have known what it was to be afflicted in this way and that it was good.

Another effect of gospel justification is to insure holiness. It not only insures all the means but the actual accomplishment of the work. The individual who is truly converted will surely persevere in obedience until he is fitted for heaven and actually saved.

Justification is by faith. Faith is the medium by which the blessing is conveyed to the believer. The proof of this is in the Bible: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16).

The subject is too often treated in the New Testament to be necessary to go into a labored proof. It is obvious that if men are saved at all, they must be justified in this way and not by works of law, for "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified."

JUSTIFYING FAITH

Nowhere does the Bible say that men are justified or saved for faith, as the ground of their pardon. They are justified by faith as the medium or instrument. Faith is confidence in God that leads us to love and obey Him. We are therefore justified by faith because we are sanctified--set apart--by faith. Faith is the instrument of our justification because it is the natural instrument of becoming holy. It brings us back to obedience and therefore is designated as the means of obtaining the blessings of that return. Faith is not imputed to us by an arbitrary act, but it is the foundation of all real obedience to God.

This is why faith is made the medium through which pardon comes. It first leads us to obey God from a principle of love to God. We are forgiven our sins on account of Christ. Our duty is to repent and obey God, and, when we do so, this is imputed to us as what it is--holiness, or obedience to

God. But for the forgiveness of our past sins, we must rely on Christ.

Justifying faith does not consist in believing that your sins are forgiven. If that was necessary, you would have to believe it before it was done. Remember, you sins are not forgiven until you believe. But if saving faith is believing that they are already forgiven, it is believing a think before it takes place, which is absurd. You cannot believe your sins are forgiven before you have evidence that they are forgiven; and you cannot have evidence that they are forgiven until it is true that they are forgiven--and they cannot be forgiven until you exercise saving faith. Therefore, saving faith must be believing something else.

Neither does saving faith consist in believing that you will be saved at all. You have no right to believe that you will be saved until you have exercised justifying or saving faith.

But justifying faith does consist in believing in the atonement of Christ, or believing the record that God has given of His Son. The correctness of this definition has been doubted, and I confess my own mind has undergone a change of this point.

Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. But what did Abraham believe? He believed that he should have a son. Was this all? By no means. His faith included the great blessing that depended on that event--that the Messiah, the Savior of the world, would spring from him. This was the great subject of the Abrahamic covenant, and it depended on his having a son.

Of course, Abraham's faith included the "Desire of all nations"-this was faith in Christ. The apostle Paul has shown in detail that the sum of the covenant was "In thee shall all nations be blessed" (Galatians 3:8). In verse 16, he says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ."

THE MOST EXCELLENT SACRIFICE

Some people argue that in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews the saints are not all spoken of as having believed in Christ. But if you examine carefully, you will find that in all cases faith in Christ is either included in what they believed or implied by it. Take the case of Abel. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he

obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews 11:4).

Why was his sacrifice more excellent? Because he recognized the necessity of the atonement and that "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Hebrews 9:22). Cain was a proud infidel and offered the fruits of the ground as a mere thank-offering for the blessing of Providence. Without any admission that he was a sinner or needed an atonement, he had no ground on which he could hope for pardon.

Can an individual exercise justifying faith while denying the divinity and atonement of Jesus Christ? No! The whole sum and substance of revelation, like converging rays, all center on Jesus Christ and His divinity and atonement. All that the prophets and other writers of the Old Testament say about salvation comes to Him. The Old Testament and the New--all the types and shadows--point to Him. All the Old Testament saints were saved by faith in Him. Their faith terminated in the coming Messiah, as the faith of the New Testament saints did in the Messiah already come.

In the book of 1 Corinthians, the apostle Paul shows what place he would assign to this doctrine: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15"3).

Mark that expression "first of all." It proves that Paul preached that Christ died for sinners as the "first" or primary doctrine of the gospel. And you will find that from one end of the Bible to the other the attention of men was directed to this new and living way as the only way of salvation. This truth is the only truth that can make men holy. They may believe a thousand other things, but this is the great source of sanctification: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians 5:19). This alone can be justifying faith.

There may be many other acts of faith that may be right and acceptable to God. But nothing is justifying faith except believing the record that God has given of His Son. Simply believing what God has revealed on any point is an act of faith; but justifying faith fastens on Christ, takes hold of His atonement, and embraces Him as the only ground of pardon and salvation.

PEACE LIKE A RIVER

As soon as you believe in Christ with the faith that works by love, you will be justified. You don't have to be under the wrath of Almighty God. You can be justified here and now if you will only believe in Christ. Your pardon is ready, made out and sealed with the seal of heaven. The gracious pardon will be delivered as soon as you, by one act of faith, receive Jesus Christ as He is offered in the gospel.

God has not revealed it in the Scriptures that you or any other individual are justified. But He has set down the characteristics of a justified person and declared that all who have these characteristics are justified.

All who are justified have the witness of the Spirit. They relate to the Holy Spirit. He explains the Scriptures to them and leads them to see their meaning. He leads them to the Son and to the Father and reveals the Son and the Father in them. Do you have this? If you have, you are justified. If not, you are still in sin.

Do you have the fruits of the Spirit? They are love, joy, peace, etc. These are matters of human consciousness, and if you have them, you are justified.

Jesus said to His disciples, "My peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you" (John 14:27). And again, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Do you find rest in Christ? Is your peace like a river, flowing gently through your soul and filling you with calm and heavenly delight? Or do you still feel a sense of condemnation before God?

Do you feel a sense of acceptance with God, of pardoned sin, and of communion? This must be a matter of experience, it if exists. Don't imagine you can be in a justified state without evidence of it. You may have peace filling your soul yet not draw the inference that you are justified.

I remember a time when my mind was so peaceful that it seemed to me as if all nature was listening for God to speak. But I was not aware that this was the peace of God or that it was evidence of my being justified. I thought I had lost all my conviction and actually tried to bring back the sense of condemnation that I had before. I did not draw the inference that I was justified until the love of God was shed abroad in my soul by the

Holy Spirit and I was compelled to cry out, "Lord, it is enough, I can bear no more." I don't believe it possible for the sense of condemnation to remain where the act of pardon is already past.

If you are justified, you are also adopted as one of God's dear children, and He has sent His Spirit into your heart. You naturally cry, "Abba, father!" (See Romans 8:15.) He seems to you just like a father, and you want to call Him Father. Do you know this? It is one thing to call God your Father in heaven and another thing to feel toward Him as a Father.

LOOKING WITHIN YOURSELF

Do you honestly think you are justified? Would you dare to die now? Suppose the loud thunders of the last trumpet shook the universe and you see the Son of God coming to judgment--would you be ready? Could you look up calmly and say, "This is a solemn sight, but Christ has died, and God has justified me; who will condemn me?"

Are you under the discipline of the covenant? If not, do you have any reason to believe you were ever justified? God's covenant with you, if you belong to Christ, if this: "If they backslide, I will visit their iniquity with the rod and chasten them with stripes." Do you feel the stripes? Is God awakening your mind and convicting your conscience? If not, where is the evidence that He is dealing with you as a son?

Those of you who have evidence that you are justified should maintain your relationship with God and live up to your real privileges. This is immensely important. There is no virtue in being distrustful and unbelieving. It is important to your growth in grace. One reason many Christians do not grow in grace is that they are afraid to claim the privileges of God's children that belong to them.

If you have the evidence that you are justified, press forward to holiness of heart and come to God with all the boldness that an angel would--know how near you are to Him. This is your duty. Why should you hold back? Why are you afraid to recognize the covenant of grace in its full extent? The provision of your Father's house are ready and free. Are you converted, justified, and restored to His favor, yet afraid to sit down at your Father's table? Don't plead that you are unworthy. This is nothing but self-righteousness and unbelief.

You are unworthy. But if you are justified, that is not longer a barrier. Your

duty is to take hold of the promises that belong to you. Take any applicable promise in the Bible to your Father and plead it before Him, believing. Do you think He will deny it? These great and precious promises were given for this very purpose-that you may become a partaker of the divine nature. Why then should you doubt? Come along to the privileges that belong to you and take hold of the love, peace, and joy offered to you in this holy gospel!

If you are not in a state of justification, however much you have prayed and suffered, you are nothing. If you have not believed in Christ, if you have not received and trusted in Him as He is set forth in the gospel, you are yet in a state of condemnation and wrath. For weeks, months, and even years you may have been groaning with distress. But for all that, you are still in the gall of bitterness. Here you see the line drawn: the moment you pass over, you are in a state of justification.

Are you now in a state of wrath? Believe in Christ. All your waiting and groaning will not bring you any nearer. Do you want more conviction? Do you say you must wait until you pray more? What good is praying in unbelief? Will the prayers of condemned rebel avail? Do you say you are unworthy? Christ died for people like you. He comes to you right now.

Now is the day of salvation. Hear the Word of God: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

Believe what God says of His Son; believe those great fundamental truths that God has revealed about salvation, rest your soul on it, and you will be saved. Will you trust Jesus Christ to dispose of you? Are you confident enough in Christ to leave yourself with Him for time and eternity?

Perhaps you are trying to pray yourself out of your difficulties before coming to Christ. It will do no good. Cast yourself down at His feet and leave your soul in His hands. Will you do it?

18. THE BREAD OF HEAVEN
by Charles G. Finney

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we

establish the law"--Romans 3:31.

Paul proved that all men were in sin, refuting the doctrine generally held by the Jews that they were a holy people saved by their works. He showed that justification can never be by works but by faith.

The greatest objection to the doctrine of justification by faith has always been that it is inconsistent with good morals and opens the flood-gates of iniquity. It has been argued that to maintain that men are to be saved by faith will make them disregard good morals and encourage them to live in sin, depending on Christ to justify them. Others maintain that the gospel does in fact release men from obligation to obey the moral law so that a more lax morality is permitted under the gospel than was allowed under the law.

Justification by faith does not set aside the moral law, because the gospel enforces obedience to the law and lays down the same standard of holiness. Jesus Christ adopted the words of the moral law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself" (Luke 10:27).

BREAKING SINFUL HABITS

The gospel requires repentance as the condition of salvation. What is repentance? The renunciation of sin. Man must repent of his disobedience to the law of God and return to obey it. If it did not maintain the law to its full extent, it might be said that Christ is the minister of sin!

By the gospel plan, the sanctions of the gospel are added to the sanctions of the law to enforce obedience to the law. The apostle says, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:28-29). Adding the awful sanctions of the gospel to those of the law enforces obedience to the precepts of the law.

Justification by faith produces sanctification, or holiness, by producing the only true obedience to the law. When the mind understands this plan and exercises faith in it, it naturally produces holiness. Sanctification is holiness, and holiness is nothing but obedience to the law, consisting in

love to God and man.

True holiness can never be produced among selfish or wicked beings by the law itself, separate from the consideration of the gospel or the motives connected with justification by faith.

If the motives of the law did not restrain men from committing sin, it is absurd to suppose the same motives can reclaim them from sin once when they have fallen under the power of selfishness. Sin is confirmed by habit. The motives of the law lose a great part of their influence once a being is fallen.

They even exert an opposite influence. The motives of the law, viewed by a selfish mind, have a tendency to cause sin to abound. This is the experience of every sinner. When he sees the spirituality of the law and does not see the motives of the gospel, it raises the pride of his heart and confirms him in his rebellion.

The case of the devil is an exhibition of what the law can do to a wicked heart. He understands the law, sees its reasonableness, has experienced the blessedness of obedience, and knows that to return to obedience would restore his peace of mind. This he knows better than any sinner of our race, who never was holy. And yet it presents to his mind no motives that reclaim him. On the contrary, it drives him further from obedience.

THE TERROR OF SINAI

When obedience to the law is held forth to the sinner as the condition of life, immediately it starts him making self-righteous efforts. In almost every instance, the first effort of the awakened sinner is to obey the law. He thinks he must first make himself better before he embraces the gospel. He has no idea of the simplicity of the gospel plan of salvation by faith, offering eternal life as a gift.

Alarm the sinner with the penalty of the law, and by the very laws of his mind he tries to amend his life and self-righteously obtain eternal life, under the influence of slavish fear. The more the law presses him, the greater are his pharisaical efforts. He hopes that if he obeys he will be accepted.

What else could you expect him to do? He is purely selfish, and although he ought to submit at once to God, he does not understand the gospel

terms of salvation. His mind is first turned to the object of getting away from the danger of the penalty, and he tries to get to heaven some other way. I don't think there is an instance in history of a man who has submitted to God until he has seen that salvation must be by faith and that his own self-righteousness cannot save him.

If you try to produce holiness by legal motives, the very fear of failure has the effect to divert attention from the objects of love--God and Christ. The sinner is all the while dreading Mount Sinai, watching his footsteps to see how near he comes to obedience; how can he get into the spirit of heaven?

The penalty of the law has no tendency to produce love at first. It may increase love in those who already have it when they contemplate it as an exhibition of God's infinite holiness. The angels in heaven and good men on earth contemplate its excellence and see it as an expression of God's good will to His creatures. Then it appears amiable and lovely and increases their delight and confidence in God.

It is the opposite for the selfish man. He sees the penalty hanging over his head with no way of escape. He doesn't consider becoming enamored with the Being that holds the thunderbolt over his devoted head. The nature of his mind causes him to flee from Him, not to Him. The inspired writers never dreamed that the law could sanctify men. The law is more prone to slay then to make alive, to cut off men's self-righteous hopes forever and compel them to flee to Christ.

Sinners naturally and necessarily view God as an irreconcilable enemy. They are wholly selfish, and apart from the consideration of the gospel, they view God just as the devil views Him. No motive in the law can be shown to a selfish mind that will inspire love. Can the influence of the penalty do it?

This would be a strange plan of reformation, to send men to hell to reform them! Let him go on in sin and rebellion to the end of life and then be punished until he becomes holy. I wonder why the devil has not become holy! He has suffered long enough. Having been in hell these thousands of years, he is no better than he was. The reason is, no gospel and no Holy Spirit exist there to apply the truth--the penalty only confirms his rebellion.

FREEDOM THROUGH FAITH

Justification by faith can produce real obedience to the law. It doesn't set aside the law as a standard but sets aside the penalty of the law. The preaching of justification as a gift bestowed through the simple act of faith is the only way that obedience to the law is brought about.

It relieves the mind from the pressures that naturally tend to confirm selfishness. While the mind is looking only at the law, it feels the influence of hope and fear, which furthers selfish efforts. But justification by faith annihilates this spirit of bondage. The apostle says, "We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear" (Romans 8:15). This plan of salvation produces love and gratitude to God and leads the soul to taste the sweets of holiness.

The believer in the gospel plan finds salvation full and complete, with both sanctification and eternal life already prepared. Instead of being driven to the life of a Pharisee in laborious and exhausting religion, he received it as a free gift and is left free to exercise true love. He now can live and labor for the salvation of others, leaving his own soul unreservedly to Jesus.

The fact that God has provided and given him salvation is calculated to awaken in the believer a concern for others when he sees them dying. How far from every selfish motive are those influences. It portrays God not as an irreconcilable enemy but as a grieved and offended Father, desirous that His subjects should become reconciled to Him and live. This is calculated to produce love. It exhibits God as making great sacrifice to reconcile sinners to Himself from no other motive than a pure and disinterested regard to their happiness.

The law represents God as armed with wrath, determined to punish the sinner without hope or help. The gospel represents Him as offended but anxious that they should return to Him. And He has made the greatest conceivable sacrifices out of a pure disinterested love to His wandering children.

I once heard a father say that he had tried in his family to imitate the government of God. When his child did wrong, he reasoned with him and showed him his faults. When he was fully convinced, confounded and condemned, the father asked him,

"Do you deserve to be punished?"

"Yes, sir," his son answered.

"I know it," said the father, "and now if I were to let you go, what influence would it have over the other children? Rather than do that, I will take the punishment myself." So he laid the paddle on himself, and it had the most astonishing effect on the mind of the child. He had never tried anything so perfectly subduing to the mind as this. And from the laws of mind, it must be so. It affects the mind in a manner entirely different from the naked law.

Under the law, nothing but hope and fear can operate on the sinner's mind. But under the gospel, the influence of hope and fear are set aside, and a new set of considerations are presented--God's entire character, in all the attractions He can command. It gives the most heart-breaking, sin subduing views of God and presents Him to the senses in human nature. It exhibits disinterestedness and love.

DEATH TO SELFISHNESS

Satan prevailed against our first parents by leading them to doubt God's selfless love. The gospel demonstrates the truth and corrects this lie.

The law represents God as the inexorable enemy of the sinner, securing happiness to all who perfectly obey but thundering down wrath on all who disobey. The gospel reveals new features in God's character not known before. Doubtless the gospel increases the love of all holy beings and gives greater joy to the angels in heaven, greatly increasing their love, confidence, and admiration when they see God's amazing pity and forbearance toward the guilty.

The law drove the devils to hell, and it drove Adam and Eve from Paradise. But when the believer sees the same holy God giving His beloved Son for rebels and taking unwearied pains to save sinners, it strengthens the motives in their minds to obedience and love.

The devil, who is a purely selfish being, always accuses others of being selfish. He accused Job of this: "Doth Job fear God for nought?" (Job 1:9). Satan came to our first parents and accused God of being selfish. He told them that the only reason for God's forbidding them to eat of the tree of knowledge was the fear that they might come to know as much as

Himself. The gospel shows what God is. If He was selfish, He would not take such pains to save those whom He might with perfect ease crush to hell.

Nothing will make selfish people more ashamed of their selfishness than to see disinterested benevolence in others. Therefore wicked people are always trying to appear unselfish. Let a selfish individual who has any heart see true benevolence in others, and it is like coals on his head. The apostle Paul understood this when he said, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20).

This is what the gospel does to sinners. It shows them that regardless of all they have done to God, He still loves them with selfless love. When he sees God stooping from heaven to save him and understands that it is indeed true, it melts and breaks his heart, strikes a death blow to selfishness, and wins him over to unbounded confidence and holy love.

God has so constituted the mind that it must acknowledge virtue. It must do this as long as it retains the power of moral agency. This is as true in hell as in heaven. The devil feels this. When an individual sees that God doesn't want to condemn him and offers salvation as a gift through faith, he must feel admiration for God's benevolence. His selfishness is crushed--the law has done its work, and he sees that all his selfishness has done no good. The next stop if for his heart to surrender to God's love.

Suppose a man was sentenced to death for rebellion and had tried to get pardoned but failed because his reasons were hollow-hearted and selfish. He sees that the government understands his motives and that he is not really reconciled. He knows himself that they were hypocritical and selfish, moved by the hope of favor or the fear or wrath.

But now let the government offer him a free pardon on the simple condition that he receive it as a gift, making no account of his own works--what influence will it have on him mind? The moment he finds the penalty set aside and that he has no need to go to work by any self-righteous efforts, his mind is filled with admiration. The government has made great sacrifices to grant this. When his selfishness is slain, he melts like a child at his sovereign's feet, ready to obey out of love.

MOTIVES OF THE GOSPEL

All true obedience turns on faith, which secures self from its errors and weights and rises up in communion with God.

To attempt to convert and sanctify the minds of sinners without the motives of the gospel is unphilosophical and unscriptural. You can press the sinner with the law and make him see his own character, the greatness and justice of God, and his ruined condition. But hide the motives of the gospel from his mind, and it is all in vain.

Some people are afraid to expose the sinner's mind to the character of God. They try to make him submit to God by casting him down in despair. This is not only against the gospel but it is absurd in itself. It is absurd to think that, in order to destroy the selfishness of a sinner, you must hide the knowledge of how much God loves him and the great sacrifices He has made to save him.

Sinners are in no danger of getting false hopes if they are allowed to know the real compassion of God. While you hide this, it is impossible to give him anything but a false hope. Withholding the fact that God has provided salvation as a gift from a convicted sinner is the best way to confirm his selfishness. If he gets any hope, it will be a false one. To pressure him with the law alone is to build a self-righteous foundation.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

The only possible way of reclaiming selfish beings is by grace. Suppose salvation was not totally a gift but that some degree of good works was taken into account in justification. Within this consideration is a stimulus to selfishness. You must bring the sinner to see that he is entirely dependent on free grace. A full and complete justification is bestowed on the first act of faith as a gift. No part of it is a reward for something he can do. This alone dissolves the influence of selfishness and secures holy action.

If all this is true, sinners should be given the fullest explanation, as soon as possible, of the whole plan of salvation. They should be made to see the law, their own guilt, and their helplessness to save themselves. Then the depth of the love of God should be opened. You will effectually crush his selfishness and subdue his soul in love to God. Don't' be afraid to show the whole plan of salvation and give the fullest possible testimony

of the infinite compassion of God. Show him that, despite his guilt, the Son of God is knocking at the door and pleading with him to be reconciled to God.

Many convicted sinners continue to embrace Mount Sinai with self-righteous efforts to save themselves by their own works. Many sinners try to get more feeling by waiting until they have prayed more and made greater efforts. They expect to reconcile themselves to God in this way.

The sinner needs to see that he is looking for salvation under the law. He must see that all this is superseded by the gospel, which offers him all he wants as a gift. He must hear Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me." Instead of trying your self-righteous prayers and efforts, here is what you are looking for. Believe and you will be saved. (See John 14:6.)

The law is useful to convict men, but it never breaks the heart. The gospel alone does that. The degree in which a convert is brokenhearted is in proportion to the degree of clearness with which he understands the gospel.

Converts, if you can call them so, who entertain a hope under legal preaching may intellectually approve the law and have a sort of dry zeal, but they are never brokenhearted Christians. If they have not seen God in the gospel, they are not Christians with tears trembling in their eye, shaking with emotion at the name of Jesus.

Sinners must be led to Christ and made to take hold of the plan of salvation by faith. To expect to do them good in any other way is vain.

19. CHRISTIAN PERFECTION
by Charles G. Finney

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" --Matthew 5:48.

God has two kinds of perfections, natural and moral. His natural perfections constitute His nature or essence and are His eternity, immutability, omnipotence, etc. They are called natural perfections because they have no moral character. God has not given them to Himself because He did not create Himself but existed from eternity with

these attributes in full possession. All these God possesses in an infinite degree.

These natural perfections are not the perfection required. The attributes of our nature were created in us, and we are not required to produce any new natural attributes. It would not be possible. We are not required to possess any of them in the degree that God possesses them.

Christian perfection is not freedom from temptation. James says, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and enticed" (James 1:14). The sin is not in the temptation but in yielding to them. A person may be tempted by Satan, the appetites, or by the world and yet not have sin. All sin consists in voluntarily consenting to the desires.

The perfection required is not the infinite moral perfection that God has: man, being a finite creature, is not capable of infinite affections. God, being infinite in Himself, must be infinitely perfect. But this is not required of us.

THE OBEDIENCE OF LOVE

Christian perfection is perfect obedience to the law of God. The law of God requires perfect, disinterested, impartial benevolence--love to God and neighbor. It requires that we be motivated by the same feeling and act on the same principles that God acts upon. We must leave self out of the question as uniformly as He does and be as separated from selfishness as He is. We must be in our measure as perfect as God is.

Christianity requires that we do neither more nor less than the law of God prescribes. This is being, morally, just as perfect as God. Everything is here included: to feel as He feels, love what He loves, and hate what He hates--for the same reason that He loves and hates.

God loves Himself with the love of benevolence, or regards His own interest and happiness as the supreme good, because it is the supreme good. He requires us to love Him in the same way. He loves Himself with infinite complacency because He knows that He is infinitely worthy and excellent; and He requires the same of us. He also loves His neighbor as Himself, according to their real value. From the highest angel to the smallest worm, He regards their happiness with perfect love.

God cannot depart from this rule any more than we can without

committing sin. For Him to do it would be much worse than for us to do it because he is greater than we are. God's very nature binds Him to this. He has created us moral beings in His own image, capable of conforming to the same rule as Himself. This rule requires us to have the same character as He does--to love impartially with perfect love and to seek the good of others as He does. This, and nothing less, is Christian perfection.

The command in the text, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," is given under the gospel. Christ here commands the same thing that the law requires. The gospel does not require perfection as the condition of salvation, but no part of the obligation of the law is discharged. The gospel holds those who are under it to the same holiness as those under the law.

God cannot discharge us from the obligation to be perfect. If He were to attempt it, He would give us a license to sin. While we are moral beings, there is no power in the universe that can discharge us from the obligation to be perfect. Can God discharge us from the obligation to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength? That would be saying that God doesn't deserve such love. And if He cannot discharge us from the whole law, He cannot discharge us from any part of it, for the same reason.

How perfect are we required to be? Where do you find a rule in the Bible to determine how much less holy you are allowed to be under the gospel than you would be under the law? Should we let each man judge for himself? Do you think it is your duty to be more perfect than you are now? Can you say, "Now I am perfect enough; I have some sin left, but I have gone as far as it is my duty to go in this world"? The more holy a person is, the more strongly he feels the obligation to be perfect.

CONFORMING TO GOD'S WILL

Christian perfection is attainable in this life. God commands us to be perfect as He is perfect. Can we say this is impossible? When God commands something, isn't there a natural possibility of doing what He commands?

I remember hearing an individual say he preached repentance to sinners because God commands it; but he would not preach that they could repent because God has nowhere said it was possible. What nonsense!

Always understand that when God requires anything of men, they possess the faculties to do it. Otherwise, God requires of us impossibilities and sends sinners to hell for not doing what they couldn't do!

There can be no question of this. Perfection is to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. It requires us to exert our own powers. The law itself goes no further than to require the right use of the powers you possess.

Some may object that if there is a natural ability to be perfect, there is a moral inability, which comes to the same thing. Inability is inability, call it what you will. If we have moral inability, we are as unable as if our inability was natural.

First, there is no more moral inability to be perfectly holy than there is to be holy at all. You can as easily be perfectly holy as you can be holy at all. The true distinction between natural ability and moral ability is this: natural ability relates to the powers and faculties of the mind; moral ability relates only to the will. Moral inability is nothing but unwillingness to do a thing.

When you ask whether you have moral ability to be perfect, if you can, "Am I willing to be perfect? I answer, "No." If you were willing to be perfect, you would be perfect, for the perfection required is only a perfect conformity of the will to God's law.

If you ask, then, "Are we able to will right?" the question implies a contradiction in supposing that there can be such a thing as a moral agent unable to choose or will. There is no such thing as moral inability. When we speak of inability to do a thing, we mean a lack of power. To say, therefore, that we are unable to will, is absurd.

Desperate unwillingness is the case. There is a stubborn unwillingness in sinners to become Christians and in Christians to come up to the full perfection required both by the law and gospel. Sinners may want to become Christians, and Christians may desire to be rid of all their sins, and may even agonize in prayer for it. They may think they are willing to be perfect, but they deceive themselves.

When Christians are truly willing to give up all sin and have no will of their own but merge in the will of God, then their bonds are broken. When they

yield absolutely to God's will, then they are filled with all the fullness of God.

THE PROMISE OF HOLINESS

The question is this: Do I have a right to expect to be perfect in this world? Is there any reason for me to believe that I can be completely subdued and love God as much as the law requires? But is perfection attainable?

I believe it is. Much has been said about Christian perfection, and individuals who have entertained it have run into many wild notions. It seems that the devil anticipated the movement of the Church and created a negative state of feeling. The moment the doctrine of sanctification is presented, people cry, "Why, this is Perfectionism" (the idea that Jesus' perfection was so imputed to us that we cannot sin).

But despite the errors into which Perfectionsists have fallen, there is such a thing taught in the Bible as Christian perfection. Everybody needs to know this. I entirely reject the peculiarities of modern Perfectionists. I have read their publications, and I cannot agree with many of their views. But Christian perfection is a duty, and I am convinced that it is attainable in this life.

In 1 Thessalonians 4:3, we are told, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." If you examine the Bible carefully, from one end to the other, you will find it plainly taught that God wills the holiness of Christians just as He will sinners would repent. Why should He not reasonably expect it? He requires it. No man can show, from the Bible, that God does not require perfect sanctification in this world or that it isi not just as attainable as any degree of sanctification.

If you have never looked into the Bible with this view, you will be astonished to see how many more passages there are that speak of deliverance from the commission of sin than there are that speak of deliverance from the punishment of sin. The passages that speak of deliverance from punishment are nothing compared to the others.

What is sanctification? Holiness! When a prophecy speaks of the sanctification of the Church are we to understand that it is partial sanctification? When God requires holiness is it partial holiness? Surely not. He promises holiness! We have so long understood the Scriptures in

regard to the way things are that we lose sight of the real meaning. But if we look at the language of the Bible, I defy any man to prove that the promise and prophecies of holiness mean anything short of perfect sanctification.

Holiness is the great blessing promised throughout the Bible. Peter says, "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakes of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4). If that is not perfect sanctification, what is? These "exceeding great and precious promises" are given for this object, and by believing, appropriating, and using them, we can become partakers of the divine nature.

The promise of the Abrahamic covenant was that his posterity would possess the land of Canaan and that through him by the Messiah, all nations would be blessed. The seal of the covenant, circumcision, shows us what was the principal blessing intended: it was holiness. Peter tells us in another place that Jesus Christ was given so that He might sanctify unto Himself a peculiar people. (See 1 Peter 2:9.)

A GOSPEL OF PURIFICATION

All the purifications and other ceremonies of the Mosaic ritual signify the same thing; they all point to a Savior to come. Those ordinances of purifying the body were set forth, every one of them, with reference to the purifying of the mind--or holiness.

Under the gospel, the same thing is signified by baptism: the washing of the body represents the sanctification of the mind.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 promises the great blessing of the gospel: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them."

It is the same in Jeremiah 33:8: "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me." Search the Bible for yourselves, and you will

be astonished to find how uniformly the blessing of sanctification is held up as the principal blessing promised to the world through the Messiah.

The great objective of the Messiah's coming was to sanctify His people! Just after the fall it was prophesied that Satan would bruise His heel but that He would bruise Satan's head. And John tells us, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8).

Jesus has put Satan under His feet. His purpose is to win us back to our allegiance to God, sanctify us and purify our minds. As it is said in Zechariah 13:1, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."

In the New Testament, we are told that the Savior was called "Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). And, "He was manifested to take away our sins," and "to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:5,8).

Paul speaks of the grace of God, or the gospel, as teaching us to deny ungodliness: "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:13-14).

In Ephesians, we learn that "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27).

Christ came to sanctify the Church to such a degree that it should be absolutely "holy and without blemish." "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Soin the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Romans 11:26-27).

In 1 John 1:9, it is said, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

What is to "cleanse us from all unrighteous," if it is not perfect

sanctification? In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Paul prays a very remarkable prayer: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

What does "sanctify you wholly" mean? Does that mean perfect holiness? The apostle says not only that your whole soul and spirit but that your "body be preserved blameless." Could an inspired apostle make such a prayer if he didn't believe the blessing possible? He goes on to say, in the next verse, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Perfect holiness in believers is the objective of the Holy Spirit. The whole tenor of Scripture respecting the Holy Spirit proves it. All the commands to be holy, the promises, the prophecies, the blessings, the judgments, and the duties of religion are means that the Holy Spirit employs for sanctifying the Church.

If being perfectly holy is not practical, then the devil has so completely accomplished his design in corrupting mankind that Jesus Christ is at fault and has no way to sanctify His people but to take them out of the world. Is it possible that Satan has the advantage over God? Is God's Kingdom to be only partially established, and are saints to spend half of their time serving the devil?

If holiness is not attainable in this world, it is either from a lack of motives in the gospel or a lack of power in the Spirit of God. In another life we may be like God, for we will see Him as He is. But why not here, if we have faith that is the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1)? There is a promise to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" that "they shall be filled." (See Matthew 5:6.) What is it to be "filled" with righteousness but to be perfectly holy? Are we to go through life hungry, thirsty, and unsatisfied?

If the power of habit can be so far encroached upon that an impenitent sinner can be converted, why can't it be absolutely broken so that a converted person may be wholly sanctified? The greatest difficulty is when selfishness has control of the mind and habits of sin are wholly unbroken. This obstacle is great, and no power but the Holy Spirit can

overcome it; and in many instances, God Himself cannot, consistent with His wisdom, use the means necessary to convert the soul. But after He has broken the power of selfishness and the obstinancy of habit and actually converted the individual, God has sufficient resources to sanctify the soul altogether!

Men feel that they have fastened upon themselves appetites and physical influences that they believe are impossible to overcome by moral means. Paul, in the 7th chapter of Romans, describes a man in great conflict with the body. But in the next chapter, he speaks of one who had gotten the victory over the flesh. "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:10-11). This quickening of the body is the influence of the Spirit of God upon the body--the sanctification of the body.

You ask, "Does the Spirit of God produce a physical change in the body?" I will illustrate it by the case of the drunkard. The drunkard has brought upon himself a diseased state, an unnatural thirst so strong that it seems impossible he can ever be reclaimed and entirely overcome this physical appetite. I have heard of cases where drunkards have been made to see the sin of drunkenness in such a strong light that they abhorred strong drink and never had the least desire for it again.

I once knew an individual who was a slave to the use of tobacco. One day he became convinced that it was a sin for him to use it. The struggle against it finally drove him to God in such an agony of prayer that he got the victory at once over the appetite and never had the least desire for it again.

I am not now giving you philosophy but facts. I've heard of people over whom a life of sin had a perfect mastery, but in time of revival they have been subdued and their appetites have died. The mind may be occupied and absorbed with greater things, never giving a thought to the things that would revive the vicious appetites.

Any appetite of the body may be subdued if a sufficient impression is made upon the mind to break it up. Haven't you known times when one absorbing topic has so filled your mind and controlled your soul that the

appetites of the body remained, for the time, perfectly neutralized? Suppose this state of mind became constant. Wouldn't all these physical difficulties that stand in the way of perfect holiness be overcome? "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did" (Hebrews 7:19).

WHO SETS THE STANDARD?

Paul says "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect" (Philippians 3"12). But it is not said that he continued so until his death or that he never did attain perfect sanctification. The manner in which he speaks in the remainder of the verse indicates that he expected to become perfectly holy: "But I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:12).

John speaks of himself as if he loved God perfectly. But even if the apostles were not perfect, this does not mean others cannot be. They clearly declared holiness to be their duty and were aiming at it as if they expected to attain it in this life. They command us to do the same.

Why shouldn't the Church be growing better? It seems to be the prevailing idea that the Church is to look back to the early saints as the standard. I think the reverse is true. We ought to aim at a much higher standard than theirs.

I believe many saints have attained perfect holiness. Enoch and Elijah were probably free from sin before they were taken out of the world. In different ages there have been numbers of Christians who were upright and had nothing against them. Men declare that nobody would say that they were free from sin for any other motive but pride. But why can't a man say he is free from sin, if it is so, without being proud? He can say he is converted without being proud!

Won't the saints say it in heaven, to the praise of the grace of God? Then why shouldn't they say it now from the same motive? I don't profess now to have attained perfect sanctification, but if I had attained it--if I felt that God had given me the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil and made me free from sin--would I keep it a secret and let my brethren stumble on in ignorance of what the grace of God can do? Never. I would tell them that they could expect complete deliverance if they would only lay hold of Christ. He came to save His people from their sins.

I have recently read John Wesley's "Plain Account of Christian Perfection." I wish every member of the Church would read it. I would also recommend the memoir of James Brainerd Taylor. I have read it three times within a few months. It is plain that he believed that Christian perfection is a duty and is attainable by believers in this life.

Sometimes you hear people argue against Christians perfection on the ground that a man who was perfectly holy couldn't exist in this world. People think that if a person was perfectly sanctified and loved God perfectly, he would be in such a state of excitement that he couldn't remain in the body, eat or sleep, or attend to the duties of life. But the Lord Jesus Christ was a man, subject to all the temptations of other men. He also loved God with all His heart, soul, and strength. Yet He wasn't in such a state of excitement that He couldn't eat, sleep, or work at His trade as a carpenter.

ACCEPTING GOD'S GRACE

Christians don't believe that God wills them to be perfectly sanctified in this world. They know He commands them to be perfect, as He is perfect. But they think He is secretly unwilling. They say, "Why doesn't He do more to make us perfect?"

Sinner reason the same way. They say, "I don't believe He wills my repentance; if He did, He would make me repent." God may prefer their continued impenitence and damnation to using influences other than those He uses to bring them to repentance.

If God were to bring all the power of His government to bear on one individual, He might save him. But at the same time, it would so derange His government that it would be a greater evil than for that individual to go to hell.

In the same way, God has furnished Christians with all the means of sanctification and requires them to be perfect. He desires that they should do exactly what He commands them to do.

Hunger and thirst after holiness is not holiness. The desire of a thing isn't the thing desired. If they hunger and thirst after holiness, they ought to give God no rest until He fulfills His promise that they will be made perfectly holy.

Christians think they are to remain in sin, and all they hope for is forgiveness and holiness in heaven. But the whole framework of the gospel is designed to break the power of sin and fill men with all the fullness of God. If the Church would read the Bible and lay hold of every promise, they would find them great and precious.

How many are seeking holiness by their own resolutions and works--their fastings, prayers, and activities--instead of taking hold of Christ by faith. It is all work, when it should be by faith in "Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

When they take hold of the strength of God, they will be sanctified. Faith will bring Christ right into the soul and fill them with the same Spirit that breathes through Himself. These dead works are nothing. Faith must sanctify and purify the heart. Faith is the substance of things hoped for and brings Jesus into the soul. The life that we live here should be by faith in the Son of God. It is from not knowing or not regarding this that there is so little holiness in the Church.

Instead of taking scriptural views of their dependence to see where their strength is and realizing how willing God is to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask, too many Christians sit in unbelief and sin to "wait for God's time." They call this "depending on God." The Holy Spirit is there with power to enlighten, lead, sanctify, kindle the affections, and fill the soul continually with all the fullness of God! Give up your soul to His control and hold on to the arm of God. His grace is sufficient!

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION

1. Are we required to produce any new natural attributes? _____.

2. Is Christian perfection freedom from temptation? _____.

3. All sin consists in _____

4. The perfection required is not the _____ .

5. Christian perfection is _____ .

6. What is being just as morally perfect as God is? _____ .

7. God has created us moral beings in His own image, capable of _____ .

8. This rule requires us to have _____

to love _____

This, and nothing else, is _____.

9. When would God give us a license to sin? _____ .

10. Is Christian perfection attainable in this life? _____.

11. What is moral inability? _____ .

12. The moral perfection required is only a perfect _____ .

13. When we speak of inability to do a thing, we mean _____ .

To say therefore, that we are _____ is _____.

14. When are the bonds in the Christian life broken? _____

15 What is perfectionism? _____

_____.

16. From the Bible, no man can show that God does not _____

.

17. Looking at the Bible, you will be astonished to see how _____

.

18. Why have we lost sight of the real meaning of scriptures? _____

19. _____ is the great blessing promised throughout the Bible.

For By These He Has Granted To Us His Precious And Magnificent Promises, In Order That By Them You Might Become Partakers Of The Divine Nature, Having Escaped The Corruption That Is In The World By Lust. 1 Peter 1:4

And In Him You Were Also Circumcised With A Circumcision Made Without Hands, In The Removal Of The Body Of The Flesh By The Circumcision Of Christ. Colossians 2:11

Then I Will Sprinkle Clean Water On You, And You Will Be Clean; I Will Cleanse You From All Your Filthiness And From All Your Idols. Moreover, I Will Give You A New Heart And Put A New Spirit Within You; And I Will Remove The Heart Of Stone From Your Flesh And Give You A Heart Of Flesh. Ezekiel 36:24,25

And I Will Cleanse Them From All Their Iniquity By Which They Have Sinned Against Me, And I Will Pardon All Their Iniquities By Which They Have Sinned Against Me, And By Which They Have Trans- Gressed Against Me. Jeremiah 33:8

"Behold, Days Are Coming," Declares The Lord, "When I Will Make A New Covenant With The House Of Israel And With The House Of Judah, Not Like The Covenant Which I Made With Their Fathers In The Day I Took Them By The Hand To Bring Them Out Of The Land Of Egypt, My Covenant Which They Broke, Although I Was A Husband To Them," Declares The Lord. "But This Is The Covenant Which I Will Make With The House Of Israel After Those Days," Declares The Lord, "I Will Put My Law Within Them, And On Their Heart I Will Write It; And I Will Be Their God, And They Shall Be My People. And They Shall Not Teach Again, Each Man His Neighbor And Each Man His Brother Saying, 'Know The Lord' For They Shall All Know Me, From The Least Of Them To The Greatest Of Them," Declares The Lord, "For I Will Forgive Their Iniquity, And Their Sin I Will Remember No More." Jeremiah 31:31-34 / Hebrews 8:8-12

20. The seal of the covenant with Abraham, _____,
shows us what was the principal blessing intended: _____ .

21. What is the principal blessing promised to the world thru the Messiah?

22. What was the great objective of the Messiah's coming? _____ .

23. If Holiness is not attainable in this world, it is either:

A. _____

or,

B. _____

24. The greatest difficulty is when _____

and

25. This obstacle is great and not power _____

_____can overcome it.

26. Christians don't believe _____

They know He _____

.

But they think He is _____.

They say, "_____

27. Hunger and thirst after holiness _____.

The desire of a thing _____

.

28. Are we to seek holiness by resolutions, fastings, prayer and activities? _____.

29. The Holy Spirit is present to enlighten, _____, _____,

_____, and fill _____ .

20. PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING
by Charles G. Finney

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" -- Matthew 5:48.

The Church is not sanctified, and we ought to know why. If the defect is in God, we ought to know it. If He has not provided a sufficient revelation or

if the power of the Holy Spirit is not adequate to sanctify His people, we ought to understand it so we don't perplex ourselves with vain endeavors. But if the fault is in us, we ought also to know it, lest we charge God foolishly by imagining He has required of us what we cannot attain.

THE RELIGION OF WORKS

The first general reason for people not being sanctified is that they seek sanctification by works and not by faith. The religion of works assumes a great variety of forms, and it is interesting to see the shifting forms it takes.

One form is where men try to render their damnation unjust. It doesn't matter whether they think they are Christians or not if they are trying to live so as to make it unjust for God to send them to hell. This was the religion of the Pharisees. And there are many today whose religion is purely of this character. You will often find them ready to confess they have never been born again. But they speak of their own works in a way to make it obvious they think they are to good to be damned.

Many people are seeking by their works to recommend themselves to the mercy of God. They know they deserve to be damned and will forever deserve it. But they also know that God is merciful; and they think that if they live honest lives and do kind thinks for the poor, God will forgive their sins and save them.

This is the religion of most modern moralists. Living under the gospel, they know they cannot be saved by works. Yet they think that if they go to church and help support the minister, etc., they will recommend them to God's mercy. I understand this is the system of religion held by modern Unitarians. Whether they understand or admit it, it comes to this. They set aside the atonement of Christ and don't expect to be saved by His righteousness. They seem to have a sentimental religion. With their morality and their liberality, they depend on the mercy of God. On this ground they expect to receive forgiveness for their sins.

Another form of the religion of works is when people try to prepare themselves to accept Christ. They understand that salvation is only through Jesus Christ, and they know they can't be saved by works or by the general mercy of God. But they have heard that others went through a long process of distress before they submitted to Christ and found

peace in believing. They think a certain preparatory process is necessary and they must pray and run here and there to attend meetings. They lie awake many nights and suffer much distress, perhaps falling into despair. Then they feel they are ready to accept Christ.

This is the situation of many convicted sinners. When they are awakened and find they cannot be saved by their works, they then prepare to receive Christ. Perhaps some of you are like this. You dare not come to Jesus as you are. You have prayed little, attended few meetings, and felt little distress. Instead of going to Christ and throwing yourself unreservedly into His hand, you lash your mind into more conviction and distress in order to prepare yourself to accept Him.

Suppose an individual conceived this as the way to become holy. Every Christian can see this is absurd. However he may multiply such works, he is not beginning to approach holiness. The first act of holiness is to believe--to take hold of Christ by faith. If a Christian feels the need of holiness and tries to go through a preparatory process of self-created distress before he comes to Christ, he is just as absurd as an awakened sinner for doing it.

WORKING TO CREATE HOLINESS

Many individuals perform works to create faith and love. We suppose them to have come to Christ, but having backslidden they set themselves to perform works to beget faith and love or to beget and perfect a right state of feeling. This is one of the most common and subtle forms in which the religion of works shows itself today.

This is a ludicrous attempt to produce holiness by sin. If the feelings are not right, the act is sin. Yet people think they can create holiness by purely sinful conduct. Any act that does not spring from love is sinful. The individual acts not from the impulse of faith that works by love and purifies the heart, but he acts without faith and love, with a design to beget those affections by actions.

When faith and love exist and are the propelling motives to action, carrying them out in action has a tendency to increase them. This arises from the known laws of the mind, by which every power and every faculty gains strength by exercise. But these individuals have left their first love, if every they had any. Then they set themselves, without faith or love, to

bustle about doing things.

How absurd to think of waking up faith in the soul where it does not exist by performing outward acts from some other motive. It is mocking God. Pretending to serve God in such a way grieves the Holy Spirit and insults God.

As far as the philosophy is concerned, it is similar to the conduct of convicted sinners. But there is one difference: the sinner, in spite of all his wickedness, may eventually see his own helplessness and renounce all his own works. He may feel that his continued refusal to come to Christ is only heaping sins against God. But it is different for those who think themselves to be Christians.

Many persons who abound in religious acts are often the most hardened and removed from spiritual feeling. If performing religious duties was the way to produce right Christian feeling, we should expect that ministers and leaders would be the most spiritual. But where faith and love are not in exercise, people become hardened, cold, and full of iniquity in their outward acts. Without any spiritual life, they will become more hardened and stupid. Or if they get spiritually excited in this way, it is a superficial state of mind that has nothing holy in it.

Another reason why so many people are not holy is this: They do not receive Christ in all His functions as He is offered in the gospel. Most people are entirely mistaken here. They will never get ahead until they learn there is a radical error in the manner in which they attempt to attain holiness.

Suppose an individual is convicted of sin. He sees that God may in justice send him to hell, and that he has no way out. Now tell him of Christ's atonement. Show him how Christ died so that God could be just and yet the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. He sees it to be exactly what he needs and in faith throws himself upon Jesus for justification. He accepts Him as his justification, and that is as far as he understand the gospel. He believes, is justified, and feels the pardon of his sin.

Now, here is the very attitude in which most convicted sinners stop. They see Christ as Savior, the propitiation of their sins, to make atonement and procure forgiveness--and there they stop. After that, it is often exceedingly difficult to get their attention to what Jesus offers. Say what

you will in regard to Christ as the believer's wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and all His functions as a Savior from sin--they don't feel they need Him in these relations.

GIVING UP YOUR THRONE

The converted person feels at peace with God. Joy and gratitude fill his heart, and he rejoices in having found a Savior that will stand between him and his Judge. He may have really submitted, and for a time he follows God's commandments. But eventually he finds the working of sin in his members--unsubdued pride, his old temper breaking forth, and a multitude of enemies assaulting his soul--and he is not prepared to meet them.

Until now, he has regarded Jesus as a Savior to save him from hell. The great mass of professing Christians lose sight, almost altogether, of many of the most important functions that Christ offers to believers. When the convert finds himself brought under the power of temptation and drawn into sin, he needs to invite Christ into these areas of his life. He needs to know more of Jesus' provision for him to resist temptation.

This is not fully understood by many Christians. They never really view Christ under His name "Jesus," who saves His people from their sins. They need to receive Him as a King, to take the throne in their hearts and rule over them with absolute and perfect control, bringing every faculty and every thought into subjection. The reason why the convert falls under the power of temptation is that he has not submitted his own will to Christ in everything.

Christians complain that they cannot understand the Bible, and they are always in doubt about many things. What they need is to receive Christ as wisdom and to accept Him in His function as the source of light and knowledge.

Who of you now attach a full and definite idea to the text that says we are "in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto wisdom, and righteous, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30)? What do you understand by it? It doesn't say He is a justifier, a teacher, a sanctifier, and a redeemer, but that He is wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. What does that mean? Until Christians find out by experience and know what the Scripture means, how can the

Church be sanctified?

The Church is now like a branch plucked from a vine. Unless she abides in Christ, she cannot bear fruit. If a branch had power to voluntarily separate itself from the vine and then should try to produce fruit, what would you think? The Church is the same. Until Christians go to the eternal source of sanctification, wisdom, and redemption, they will never become holy. If they would become, by faith, absolutely united with Jesus, in all His offices and functions, then they would know what holiness is. He is the light and the life of the world. To be sanctified by Him, they must embrace Him and receive grace and knowledge, which alone can purify the soul and give the complete victory over sin and Satan.

If an individual isn't deeply convicted of his own depravity and his need to overcome the power of sin, he will never receive Jesus Christ into his soul as King. When men try to help themselves out of sin and feel strong enough to cope with their spiritual enemies, they never receive Christ fully or rely solely on Him to save them from sin.

But when they have tried to keep themselves by their own watchfulness and prayers, binding themselves by resolution and oaths to obey God, they find nothing but depravity. Then they feel their helplessness and begin to ask what to do.

GOD'S PROMISE BOOK

The Bible teaches all this plainly enough. If people would believe the Bible, they would know from the beginning their need of a Savior. But they don't receive or believe the Word until they try to work out their own righteousness. They soon find out they are nothing without Christ. Therefore, they don't receive Him in this function until they have spent years in vain, self-righteous attempts to sanctify themselves. Having begun in the spirit, they try to perfect themselves in the flesh.

Others, when they see their own condition, don't receive Christ as a Savior from sin because they are unwilling to abandon all sin. They know that if they give themselves up entirely to Christ, all sin must be abandoned; and they have some idol they are unwilling to give up.

Many people suppose they are under a fatal necessity to sin, and they drag along this load of sin until their death. They don't directly charge

God and say in words that He has made no provision for such a case as this. But they appear to suppose that Christ's atonement will cover all sins. They think that if they continue in sin all their days, He will forgive them and it will be just as well as if they had been truly holy. They don't see that the gospel has made provisions to rid us forever of all sin. They look at it as a system of pardon, leaving the sinner to drag his load of sin to the gate of heaven.

Oh, how little use Christians make of those great and precious promises. We have only to draw upon Him, and we will have whatever we need for our sanctification. "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

Christians do not really believe much that is in the Bible. Imagine you met God, and you knew it was God Himself. Suppose He held out a book in His hand and told you to take it. This book contained great and precious promises of all you needed to resist temptation, overcome sin, become perfectly holy, and fit yourself for heaven. Then He told you whenever you need anything, you only have to take the appropriate promise and present it to Him, and He will do it.

Now, if you were to receive such a book directly from the hand of God, and you knew that God had written it for you, would you believe it? Would you read it a great deal more than you now read the Bible? How eager you would be to know all that was in it. How ready to apply the promises in time of need! You would want to know it by heart! You would keep your mind familiar with its contents and be ready to apply the promises you read.

The Bible is that book! It is written by God and filled with such promises. Any Christian, by laying hold of the right promise and pleading it, can always find all he needs for his spiritual benefit.

Jesus is a complete Savior. All the promises of God are in Him to the glory of God the Father. God has promised them in the second Person of the Trinity and made them all certain through Him. Christians need to understand these promises and believe them.

Suppose they lack wisdom. Let them go to God and plead the promise. Suppose they cannot understand the Scriptures, or the path of duty is not plain. The promise is plain enough--take it. Whatever they lack of

wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, only let them go to God in faith and take hold of the promise.

SHATTERING YOUR PRIDE

Many people don't receive Jesus in all His functions because they are too proud to relinquish all self-dependence or reliance on their own wisdom and will.

How great a thing for the proud heart of man to give up its own wisdom, knowledge, will, and everything, to God! I have found this the greatest of all difficulties. Doubtless all find it so. All that God says must be true, whether we in our ignorance and blindness can see the reasonableness of it or not. If we go beyond this, we go beyond the proper province of reason.

But how unwilling the proud heart of man is to lay aside all its own vain wisdom and become like a little child under the teaching of God. The apostle says, "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Corinthians 8:2). There is a vast meaning in this. A person that doesn't receive Christ alone as his wisdom knows nothing.

If he is not taught by Jesus Christ, he has not learned the first lesson of Christianity. "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Matthew 11:27). The individual who has learned this lesson feels that he has not one iota of knowledge of any value besides what is taught by Jesus Christ. For it is written, "And they shall be all taught of God" (John 6:45).

Christians need to be searched thoroughly, shown their defects, brought under conviction, and then pointed to where their great strength lies. With their everlasting parade of dead works, they need to be shown how poor they are. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Revelation 3:17).

Until Christians are shown their poverty and the infinite emptiness and abominable wickedness of their dead works, the Church will go further and further from God. It will have only the form of godliness, denying this power thereof. (See 2 Timothy 3:5).

When you see the Christian character defective in any way, you can always know that the individual needs to receive Christ more fully to supply this defect. This defect in the believer will never be remedied until he sees Christ in that part of his character. By faith he must take hold of Christ to remedy that imperfection.

Suppose a person is selfish. He will never remedy that defect until he receives Christ as his pattern. Then the selfishness will be driven out of his heart by saturating his soul with the infinite love of the Savior. In regard to any other defect, he will never conquer it until he sees that Christ is sufficient.

RAISING THE STANDARD OF HOLINESS

Until the standard of holiness is greatly raised among ministers, the piety of the Church will not be elevated. Christians who understand these things should, therefore, constantly pray for ministers. The leaders of the Church must take hold of Christ for the sanctification of their own hearts, and then they will know what to say to the Church on the subject of holiness.

Many people seek holiness by works who don't know they are seeking in this way. They profess they are seeking sanctification only by faith and tell you they know it is vain to seek it in their own strength. But their results show they are seeking by works and not by faith.

If a man is seeking by works, he obviously is relying on performing certain preparatory steps and processes before he exercises saving faith. He is not ready now to accept Christ but thinks he must bring himself into a different state of mind as a preparation. It is at this he is aiming. He is trying without faith to get into a proper state of mind. It is all the religion of works.

How common is such a state of mind among Christians who profess to be seeking holiness. You say you must mortify sin, but the way you go about it is by self-righteous preparation, seeking to recommend yourselves to Christ as worthy to receive the blessing. But you must come right to Christ as an unworthy and ruined beggar to receive at once, by faith, the blessing you need. Like a person in a pit of clay, every struggle of your own sinks you deeper in the clay. All your attempts, instead of bringing you nearer to Christ, are only drawing you further from

God.

The sinner, by his preparatory seeking, gains no advantage. He lies, dead in trespasses and sins, removed from spiritual life like a dead corpse, until he comes to the conviction that there is nothing he can do for himself but to go now, as he is, and submit to Christ. As long as he thinks there is something he must do first, he never feels that now is God's time of salvation. As long as the Christian is seeking sanctification through works, he never feels that now is God's time to give him the victory over sin.

Multitudes deceive themselves because they have seen certain "faith without works" churches roused up, dragging along in death. Where such a church has been found, fed on dry doctrine until the members were as stupid as the seats they sat on, the first thing has been to rouse them up to do something. Perhaps that would bring such a church under conviction and lead them to repentance--not because there is any good in their doings, but because it shows them their deficiencies and awakens their consciences.

The same thing occurs when a careless sinner begins to pray. Everybody knows there is no piety in such prayers, but it calls his attention to the Lord and gives the Holy Spirit an opportunity to bring the truth to his conscience. but if you take a man who has been in the habit of praying from his childhood, whose formal prayers have made cold as a stone, praying will never bring him under conviction until he sees the true character of his ungodly prayers.

Where a church has sunk in stupidity, the most effective way to rouse the people has been to warn sinners of their danger. This gets the attention of the church and often brings many of the people to repentance.

If you take what is called a "working church," where they have been in the habit of enjoying revivals and holding meetings, you will find there is no difficulty in motivating the church to act. But as a general rule, unless there is great wisdom and faithfulness in dealing with the church, every succeeding revival will make their religion more and more superficial. Their mind will become more hardened instead of being convicted.

Tell such a church they are self-righteous and there is no Holy Spirit in their bustling, and they will be affronted. "Don't' you know that the way to

wake up is to go to work in religion?" they say. The very fact that activity has become a habit with them show they require a different course. They need first to be thoroughly probed, searched, made sensible of their deficiencies, and brought humble and believing to the foot of the cross.

GROWING IN HOLINESS

When I was an evangelist, I worked in a church that had enjoyed many revivals, It was the easiest thing in the world to get the church to bring sinners to the meetings. The impenitent would come and hear, but there was no deep feeling and no faith in the church. The minister saw this was ruining the church. Each successive revival made the converts more and more superficial. We began to preach holiness, and the church members writhed under it. The preaching ran directly against their former notions about the way to promote Christianity, and some of them were quite angry. But, after a major conflict, many of them broke and became as humble and teachable as little children.

Multitudes in the churches insist that the way to promote holiness is to work, and they think that by friction they can produce the warm love of God in their hearts. This is all wrong. Bustle and noise will never produce holiness--least of all when people are accustomed to this course.

Do you perform many religious duties yet fall short of holiness? Then throw yourself on the Lord Jesus Christ for sanctification and work to serve Him. You are working for salvation instead of working from a principle of life within, impelling you to the work of the Lord.

Do you have half the perseverance of a sinner? A sinner, driven by the fear of going to hell, exerts himself in works until his strength is exhausted and his self-righteousness is worked up. Feeling that he is helpless and undone, the sinner throws himself into the arms of Christ. But since you don't have as much perseverance, you don't have as much fear. If you think you are a Christian and that however short of holiness you come, you are still safe from hell and can go to heaven, you are wrong.

Christ is your only hope for sanctification. This is why convicted Christians generally fall short of that submission to Christ for holiness that the convicted sinner exercises for forgiveness.

If the Church grows in holiness, it will grow in works. But it does not

always follow that growth in works promotes growth in holiness. Works of religion may greatly increase while the power of Christians is rapidly declining. Often a church that begins to lose its power may be willing to do even more works than ever, but it will not arrest the decline unless the people become broken before God.

Oh, that I could convince the Church they need no other help than Christ and can come to Him for all their needs--wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. How soon they would be supplied from the depths of His infinite fullness!

PRACTICAL CHRISTIAN LIVING

1. What should we know so we won't perplex ourselves with vain endeavors?

2. The first reason people are not sanctified is they seek it by _____,
not by _____.

3. One form of works is where men try to _____

4. Another form is to recommend _____

5. This is the religion of _____.

6. Another form of works is when _____

7. The first act of holiness is to

_____.

8. Many individuals perform _____

_____.

9. This is a ludicrous attempt to produce _____.

10. Another reason for lack of holiness is this: people do not receive _____

11. Christians see Christ _____, _____

_____, _____ and there they stop.

After that, it is _____.

Say what you will _____

and all His _____

they don't feel _____.

12. When a convert finds himself brought under _____

he needs to invite _____.

13. The reason why the convert falls under the power of temptation is that _____

14. Does the Bible say Christ is a justifier, a teacher, a sanctifier, and a redeemer? _____.

15. When a Christian would become, by faith,

then he would know _____.
For If We Have Become United With Him In The Likeness Of His Death, Certainly We Shall Be Also In The Likeness Of HisResurrection, Knowing This, That Our Old Self Was Crucified With Him, That Our Body Of Sin Might Be Done Away With, That We Should No Longer Be Slaves To Sin. Romans 6:5,6

16. When do people feel their helplessness and begin to ask what to do? _____

.
17. Others know that if they give themselves _____

all

and they
_____.
18. Many think that if they
_____ ,
He will
_____ .
and it will be

19. Many people don't receive Jesus in all His functions because _____

21. DISCOVERING THE WAY OF SALVATION
by Charles G. Finney

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"--Acts 16:30,31.

"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"--1 Corinthians 1:30.

The gospel plan of salvation is by faith, not works. Originally, the human race was to be saved by perfect and eternal obedience to the law of God. Adam was the natural head of the human race, and his sin has involved us in its consequences. But his sin is not literally accounted our sin. He stood as our natural head of, and his sin has resulted in the sin and ruin of, his descendants.

"By one man"s disobedience many were made sinners"(Romans 5:19). When Adam fell, the law offered no hope of salvation.

Then the plan that had been provided by God's foresight for saving mankind by mere grace was revealed. Salvation was now placed on a new foundation by a covenant of redemption. You will find this covenant in the 89th Psalm and other places in the Old Testament. This is a covenant between the Father and the Son regarding the salvation of mankind and is the foundation of another--the covenant of grace.

GOD'S COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

In the covenant of redemption, man is merely the subject of the covenant. The parties are God the Father and God the Son. In this covenant, the Son is made the head or representative of His people. Adam was the natural head of the human family, and Christ is the covenant head of His Church.

The covenant of grace was founded on this covenant of redemption. Made with men and revealed to Adam after the fall, it was more fully revealed to Abraham. With Jesus Christ as Mediator of this covenant of grace(in opposition to the original covenant of works),salvation was now by faith. The obedience and death of Jesus Christ was regarded as the reason any individual could be saved, not an individual's personal obedience.

But Christ's obedience was not performed for us. As a man, He had to obey for Himself. If He did not obey, He became personally a transgressor. Yet there is a sense in which it may be said that His

obedience is reckoned to our account. his obedience has highly honored the law, and His death has fully satisfied the demands of public justice. Grace(not justice) has reckoned His righteousness to us. If He had obeyed the law strictly for us, justice would have accounted His obedience to us. We could have obtained salvation by right instead of asking for it through grace.

Only in this sense is salvation accounted ours: that He, being God and man, voluntarily assumed our nature and layed down His life to make atonement. This casts such a glory on God's law that grace is willing to consider his obedience ours, as if we were righteous.

Christ is also the covenant head of those who believe. He is not the natural head, as Adam was, but our covenant relationship to Him is such that whatever He has done, either as God or man, is given to us by covenant. The Church, as a body, has never understood the fullness and richness of this covenant. All there is in Christ is ours in the covenant of grace.

We receive this grace by faith. Nothing we can do makes us deserving of this righteousness. But as soon as we exercise faith, all that is contained in the covenant of grace becomes ours. This is why the inspired writers make so much of faith. Faith is our part of the covenant. It is the eye that discerns, the hand that takes hold, and the medium by which we become possessed of the blessings of the covenant. By faith the soul actually becomes possessed of all that is embraced in that act of faith. If there is not enough faith received to break the bonds of sin and set the soul at liberty, it is because the act has not embraced enough of what Christ is and what he has done.

COVENANT BENEFITS

I have referred to the verse from Corinthians for the purpose of discussing the fundamental things contained in the covenant of grace. "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.." But what is meant? How and in what sense is Christ our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption?

Jesus is often called the Wisdom of God. In the book of Proverbs, he is called Wisdom. But how is He made to us wisdom?

First, we have all the benefits of His wisdom: and if we exercise faith, we are certain to be directed by it. He is the infinite source of wisdom, and we are partakers of His wisdom and have it guaranteed to us. If we trust in Him, we may have it as certainly as if we had it originally ourselves. This is what we need from the gospel and what the gospel must furnish to suit our needs.

Any man who thinks his own theorizing and speculating are going to bring him to any right knowledge of God knows nothing at all. His carnal, earthly heart can no more study the realities of the subject than the heart of a beast. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God"(1 Corinthians 2:11). What can we know, without experience, about the character or Spirit of God?

Do you say, "We can reason about God"? What if we do reason? What can; reason do here? Suppose I should undertake to teach a pure intellectual what it is to love. I could reason and philosophize with him about love. Yet it is impossible to make a pure intellectual understand what love is unless he has actually experienced it! It's like talking about colors to a man born blind. he hears the word, but what idea can he attach to it? To get the idea of the difference of colors into his mind is impossible. The term is a mere word.

One whose mind has not experienced Christianity may reason about it. He may prove the perfections of God as he would the theory of gravity. But the spirit and life of the gospel can no more be carried to the mind by mere words, without experience, than love to an intellectual or colors to a man born blind. You may explain the law and crush him with conviction, but to give the spiritual meaning of things without the Spirit of God is absurd.

Jesus is made to us righteousness. Righteousness means holiness or obedience to law, and sanctification means the same. What distinction, therefore, did Paul have in mind?

Christ is our outward righteousness. His obedience is, under the covenant of grace, accounted to us. He didn't obey for us, and God doesn't consider us righteous because our Substitute has obeyed;, ;but as a matter of grace, we are treated as if we had obeyed.

Some people think that the righteousness of Christ is attributed to us in such a way that we are considered as having always been holy. It was once argued that righteousness was imputed to us and that we had a right to demand salvation because of justice. My view of the matter is entirely different: Christ's righteousness becomes ours by gift. God has united us to Christ and on His account treats us with favor.

For example, imagine that a father has done some service to his country, and the government rewards him. And not only is the individual himself rewarded but his entire family, because they are his children. Human governments do this, and the reason for it is very plain.

Christ's disciples are similarly considered one with Him. The Father is highly delighted with the service He has done the Kingdom, and he accounts Christ's righteousness to them as if it were their own. In other words, God treats them just as he would treat Christ Himself.

Please bear in mind that I am now speaking of outward righteousness--the reason why God accepts and saves believers in Christ. This reason includes both the obedience of Christ to the Law and His obedience unto death..

THE AUTHOR OF HOLINESS

Sanctification is inward purity or holiness. Jesus is our inward purity. The control that he exercises over us--His Spirit working in us--sheds His love abroad in our hearts, and through faith we are made holy.

When I say that Christ is our sanctification, or our holiness, I mean that He is the author of our holiness. He not only makes it available to us, by His atonement and intercession, but by His direct contact with the soul He produces holiness. He is not the remote but the immediate cause of our being sanctified. He works in us by the influences of His Spirit in a way perfectly consistent with our freedom.

Sanctification is received by faith. By faith Jesus is received and enthroned as King in our hearts. When the mind yields to Christ, it is led by His Spirit and guided and controlled by His hand. The act of the mind that throws the soul into the hand of Christ for sanctification is faith. Nothing is necessary except for the mind to sever any confidence in itself and to give itself up to be led and controlled by Him.

Imagine a child who offers his hand to his father to have him lead wherever he pleases. If the child is distrustful or unwilling to be led, or if he has confidence in his own wisdom and strength, he will break away and try to run alone. But if all that self-confidence fails, he will come and give himself up to his father again to be led entirely at his will. Similarly, by faith an individual gives his mind up to be led and controlled by Jesus Christ. He ceases from his own efforts and leaves himself in the hands of Christ for sanctification.

Jesus is our redemption. This refers to the Jewish practice of redeeming estates or relatives that had been sold for debt. When an estate had been sold out of the family or an individual had been deprived of liberty for debt, they could be redeemed by paying a price. There are frequent allusions in the bible to this practice of redemption.

While we are in our sins, under the law, we are sold as slaves in the hand of public justice. We are bound over to death and have no possible way to redeem ourselves from the curse of the law. But Christ Himself is the price of our redemption. He has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He redeems us from the power of sin.

GOD'S UNMERITED FAVOR

Under this covenant of grace, works of law have no more to do with our salvation than if we had never existed. One must differentiate between salvation by works and salvation by grace. Salvation by grace is founded on a reason entirely separate from and out of ourselves. Under the law, salvation depended on ourselves. Now we receive salvation as a free gift. Jesus Christ is the sole author, founder, and reason for our salvation.

Our own holiness does not enter at all into the reason for our acceptance and salvation. We are not indebted to Christ for a wile, until we are sanctified, and then stand in our own righteousness. However perfect and holy we may become, Jesus Christ will forever be the sole reason why we are not in hell. However holy we may become, it will be forever true that we have sinned. In the eye of justice, nothing in us short of our eternal damnation can satisfy the law. But Jesus Christ remains the sole ground of our salvation.

Faith in Christ puts us in possession of Jesus. He was the very blessing promised in the Abrahamic covenant. Throughout the Scriptures, He is

held forth as the sum and substance of all God's favors to man. He is the bread of life, the water of life, our strength, and our all.

Faith puts the mind in possession of these blessings. It annihilates those things that stand in the way of our relationship with Christ. he says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me"(Rev 3:20).

Why don't we receive Christ as our wisdom"? Because we depend on our own wisdom and think we know the things of God. As long as we depend on this, we keep the door shut. Throw open the door and give up your wisdom. When we are empty of any available knowledge concerning the way of salvation, then Jesus will teach us. Until we do this, there is a door between us and Christ. We have something of our own instead of coming and throwing ourselves perfectly into the hands of Jesus.

How does faith put us in possession of the righteousness of Christ? Until our mind takes hold of the righteousness of Christ, we are engaged in working out a righteousness of our own. Until we cease entirely from our own works and throw ourselves on Jesus for righteousness, we cannot come to Him. He won't patch up our own righteousness to make it suitable. If we depend on our prayer, our tears, our charities, or anything we have done, He will not receive us. But the moment an individual takes hold of Jesus, he receives all of Christ's righteousness through grace.

This is also true in regard to holiness and redemption. Until an individual receives Christ, he does not cease from his own works. The moment the mind yields itself up to Jesus, the responsibility is His. The believer by faith pledges Christ for his obedience and holiness. When the mind properly recognizes Christ and receives Him in unwavering faith, nothing is left contrary to the law of God.

Whenever you come to Christ, receive Him for all that He is--wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Nothing but unbelief can hinder you from enjoying it all now. No preparation will help. You must receive salvation as the free gift of grace.

True faith always works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Whenever you find any difficulty in your way, you have a lack of faith. No matter what happens to you outwardly--if you find yourself

backsliding or if you mind is confused--unbelief is the cause and faith is the remedy. If you lay hold of Jesus and keep hold, all the devils in hell can never drive you away from God or put out your light.

22. HOLINESS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT
by Charles G. Finney

"Neverless I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" --John 16:7-13.

Divine influence is necessary to enlighten and purify the minds of men. But very little knowledge of the gospel is available among men, and it exerts comparatively little influence. The gospel has hardly begun to produce holiness on the earth.

Do we need divine influence to attain the ends of the gospel? And if we do need it, then in what degree do we need it, and why? If our minds are unsettled on this question, we will be unsettled on all the subjects that practically concern our holiness.

THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING

The mind of man can understand those abstractions that make up the skeleton of the gospel--the being and character of God, the divine authority and inspiration of the Scriptures, and other fundamental doctrines that make up its framework. It can understand and see the evidence that supports them as true, just as it can theories in science.

A man by his reason can understand the law of God. It requires him to exercise perfect love toward God and all other beings. He can understand this obligation because he is a moral being. He knows by experience what love is, for he has exercised love toward different objects. And he can, therefore, form or comprehend the idea of love to

see the reasonableness of the requirement. He can understand the foundation and the force of moral obligation and see, in some measure, the extent of his obligation to love God.

Also, he can see he is a sinner and cannot be saved by his own works. He has broken the law, and it can never justify him. He knows if he is ever saved, he must be justified through mere mercy. Human understanding is capable of knowing the whole circle of theology as a system of propositions to be received and believed, on evidence, like any other science.

But unaided reason cannot attain any knowledge that will produce a sanctifying change. Our knowledge of the things of Christianity is defective without the aid of the Holy Spirit, for human understanding of the gospel lacks certain things to make it available to salvation.

We must distinguish between knowledge that might be available to one who wants to love and obey God, and what will be available to a sinner completely uninterested in holiness. One who is disposed to do right would be influenced by a far less clear and vivid view of motives than one disposed to do wrong. Whether the knowledge attainable by our present faculties would influence us to do right, if there were no sin in the world, is uncertain. The knowledge that Adam had when in a state of innocence didn't help influence him to do right. But we are now speaking of things as they are in this world, and we must show why sinners can't understand divine things that would influence them to love and serve God.

Knowledge must influence the mind. The will must be controlled. To do this, the mind must understand things and excite emotion, corresponding to the object in view. Mere intellect will never move the soul to act. A pure scientific abstraction of the intellect that does not excite any emotion is unable to move the will.

To influence sinners to love and obey God, you must have enough light to powerfully excite the mind and produce strong emotions. The reasons for obedience must appear strong and vivid and must subdue their rebellious heart and bring them voluntarily to obey God. This is helpful knowledge. This men can never have without the Spirit of God.

LIMITATIONS OF PERCEPTION

Our minds are shut up in the body and derive ideas from external objects through the senses. By ourselves we can never obtain sufficient knowledge of spiritual or eternal things to rightly influence our will. Our bodily powers were not created for this. All the ideas we can have of the spiritual world are by analogy--figures, parables, types, etc..--comparing them with the things around us. All ideas conveyed to our minds in this way are extremely imperfect, and we do not get the true idea.

Words are merely signs of ideas. They are not the ideas but the representatives of ideas. It is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to convey ideas by words. Take a little child and attempt to talk with him. Often it is difficult to get your ideas into his mind. He must have some experience of the things you are trying to teach before you can convey ideas to him by words.

Imagine you were born blind and had never seen colors. Then suppose I tried to describe a grand and beautiful painting to you. No language I could use would enable you to form a picture of it in your mind. Any subject we must describe using figurative language will come across as defective and inadequate. You have heard descriptions of people or places that you thought you had accurately pictured; but when you saw them, you found that your conception was incorrect.

Suppose an individual were to visit this world from another planet, where everything is backwards. If he learned our language and tried to describe the world he had left, we would understand it according to our ideas and experiences. If the analogy between the two worlds is imperfect, our knowledge of things there, from his description, would be imperfect in proportion. So, when we find in the Bible descriptions of heaven, hell, or anything in the invisible world, we can get no true ideas at all of the reality from mere words.

BREAKING DOWN OBSTACLES

The wickedness of our hearts perverts our judgment and shuts our minds to much that we might understand. When a man's mind is so perverted on any subject that he will deny the evidence concerning it, he cannot come to a knowledge of the truth. This is our case in regard to Christianity. Perverseness of heart shuts out the light so that the intellect does not and cannot grasp the ideas it might otherwise gain.

Prejudice is a great obstacle to the reception of correct knowledge concerning Christianity. Take the case of the disciples. They had strong Jewish prejudices respecting the plan of salvation--so strong that all the instructions of Christ Himself could not make them understand the truth. After teaching them for three years, He still couldn't get their minds in possession of the first principle of the gospel.

Until His death, Jesus couldn't make them see that He must die and be risen from the dead. Therefore, He says in His last conversation, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." This was the very design of His going away from them--that the Spirit of Truth might come and put them in possession of the things that He meant by the words He had used in teaching them.

The general truth is this: without divine illumination, men can understand from the Bible enough to convict and condemn them but not enough to sanctify and save them.

Some may ask, "What, then, is the use of revelation?" The Bible is as plain as it can be. Jesus gave instructions to His disciples as plainly as He could, as a parent would to a little child, But without divine illumination, the unaided reason of man never did and never will attain any helpful knowledge of the gospel.

The difficulty lies in the subject. The Bible contains the gospel as plain as it can be. It contains the signs of the ideas, as far as language can represent the things of Christianity. No language but figurative language can be used for this purpose. And this will forever be inadequate to put our minds in real possession of the things themselves. The difficulty is in our ignorance, sin, and the nature of the subject. This is why we need divine illumination--to get Holy Spirit knowledge of the gospel.

The Spirit of God alone can give us this illumination. The Bible says, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Corinthians 12:3). The abstract proposition of the Deity of Christ can be proved as a matter of science. But nothing short of the Holy Spirit can put the mind in possession of the idea that Christ is God. Only He can sanctify the heart.

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard,

and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45). Here it is evident that the drawing spoken of is teaching by the Holy Spirit. They must be taught by God and learn of the Father before they have the knowledge of the things of Christianity required to come to Christ.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

Jesus said, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." The word, Paracletos, here translated Comforter, properly means a "Helper" or "Teacher."

"When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of Sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:7-13).

And in the fourteenth chapter, the Savior said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17).

Again, in the twenty-sixth verse, Jesus said, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). Here you see that the office of the Spirit of God is to instruct mankind in regard to the things of Jesus.

None but the Spirit of God can meet this need. No teaching by words, whether by Jesus Christ, by His apostles, or by any teacher coming through the senses can ever put the mind in possession of spiritual things. We need someone to teach us who doesn't have to depend on words or the medium of the senses. We need some way in which the ideas themselves can be brought to our minds, not merely the signs of the ideas. This the Spirit of God can do.

How the Spirit of God does this we will never know in this world. But the fact is undeniable--He can reach the mind without the use of words and

can put our minds in possession of the ideas themselves. Types, figures, and words are only imperfect representatives. The human teacher can only appeal to our senses and finds it impossible to possess us of ideas we have never experienced.

But the Spirit of God, having direct access to the mind, can, through the outward sign, impart actual ideas to us. The Spirit of God instantly reveals to us the passage of Scripture which, in all our study and effort, we never could have understood!

Take the case again of a painting on the wall. Suppose that a congregation was blind, and I was trying to describe this painting. Now suppose that while I was trying to make them understand the various distinctions and combinations of colors, all at once their eyes were opened! They could then see for themselves the thing I was vainly trying to bring to their minds by words. The Holy Spirit opens the spiritual eye and brings the things we try to describe by analogy and signs before the mind and puts it in complete possession of the thing as it is.

No one but the Spirit of God knows the things of God well enough to give us the idea of those things correctly. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?" (1 Corinthians 2:11). I can speak to your consciousness--being a man and knowing the things of a man. But I cannot speak these things to the consciousness of a beast, and a beast can't speak of these things.

Similarly, the Bible says, "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Corinthians 2:11). The Spirit of God, knowing from consciousness the things of God, possesses a different kind of knowledge of these things than other beings can possess. He, therefore, can give us the instruction we need, which no other being can give.

THE DIVINE INSTRUCTOR

The needed influence of the Spirit of God may be possessed by men, freely, under the gospel. God is more willing to give His Holy Spirit to them who ask Him than parents are to give their children bread.

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Matthew 7"7).

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall

receive" (Matthew 21:22).

"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mark 11:24).

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

If God has made these unlimited promises to all men, then anyone who asks Him may have as much divine illumination as they ask for.

But men don't have as much divine illumination as they need. They don't ask for it in the manner or to the degree that they need it. They ask amiss or from selfish motives.

The apostle James says, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it on your lusts" (James 4:3). When an individual has some reason other than a desire to glorify God, he shouldn't expect to receive divine illumination. If his object in asking for the Holy Spirit is happiness, wisdom in the Scriptures, importance as a Christian, remarkable experience, or any other selfish motive, that is a good reason why he doesn't receive what he asks for.

Suppose a person neglects his Bible but asks God to give him knowledge. That is tempting God. God gives knowledge through the Bible, preaching, and the other appointed means of instruction. If a person will not use these means--when they are in his power--no matter how much he prayed, he shouldn't expect divine instruction. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17).

A person may learn the gospel and receive supernatural illumination if he is deprived of the normal means. If he was on a desolate island, he might receive direct illumination from the Spirit of God. And he might receive it in any other circumstances where he absolutely could not have access to any means of instruction. Some very remarkable cases of this kind have occurred.

When I was an evangelist, I participated in a revival in a neighborhood where there were many Germans. Many of them could not read. When the gospel was preached among them, the Spirit of God was poured out, and a powerful revival followed. If a meeting was appointed at any place, the whole neighborhood would come together, fill the house, and listen

intently to the preacher, who tried to fill their minds with gospel truth.

One poor German woman could not read. In one of these meetings, she told this story, which was supported by her neighbors. With many tears and a heart full of joy, she said, "When I loved God, I longed to read the Bible, and I prayed, 'O Jesus! You can teach me to read Your holy Bible," and the Lord taught me to read! There was a Bible in the house, and when I had prayed, I thought I could read the Bible. I got the book and opened it, and the words were just what I had heard people read. The Lord has taught me to read my Bible, blessed by His name for it."

Although I don't know anyone involved except a teacher who heard the German lady read, she was a woman of good character among her neighbors. Some of the most respectable of them afterwards told me they didn't doubt the truth of what she said. I have no doubt it was true.

GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

Many people don't receive illumination from the Spirit of God because they grieve Him. They grieve, or offend, the Holy Spirit so that He cannot consistently grant them His illuminating grace.

They rely on the instructions they receive from ministers, commentaries, books, or their own powers of research. All these things, without the Spirit of God, will only kill but can never make alive. It can only damn but never save. It seems the whole Church is in error on this point--depending on means for divine knowledge. No means are available without the Spirit of God. If the Church felt this--if they really felt that all the means in creation are useless without the teaching of the Holy Spirit--how they would pray, cleanse their hands, and humble their hearts until the Comforter would descend to teach them the things they need to know.

Men are responsible for what they could have of divine illumination. This is a universal truth and is acknowledged by all men. A man is just as responsible for what light he might have as for that which he actually has. Common reason admits that no man who breaks the law is to be excused from ignorance of the law, because all are responsible to know what the law is.

If your children could know your will and misbehave, you consider them all the more blameworthy. So it is in Christianity: men have both the outward means of instruction and the inward teachings of the Holy Spirit

absolutely within their reach. If they sin in ignorance, they are not only without excuse on that score, but their ignorance is itself a crime and is an aggravation of their guilt. All men are plainly without excuse for not possessing all the knowledge available for their perfect and immediate sanctification. (See Romans 1:20-21).

Without the Holy Spirit, instruction may convince the Church of duty, but it will never produce holiness. It may harden the heart but will never change it. Without divine influence, it is but a savor of death unto death.

WHEN THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND

We use all the appropriate means of instruction in our power as the medium through which the Spirit of God conveys divine illumination to the mind.

No reason exists why we should not use the means in our power to acquire knowledge as faithfully as if we could understand the whole subject without divine influence. If we don't use the means within our power, we have no reason to expect divine aid. When we help ourselves, God helps us. When we use our natural faculties to understand these things, we may expect God to enlighten us. To turn our eyes away from the light and then pray to see is to tempt God.

Blind leaders of the blind attempt to teach the things of Christianity without being themselves taught by God. No theological degree will ever make a successful teacher unless he enjoys the illuminating powers of the Holy Spirit. He is blind if he thinks he understands the Bible without this, and if he undertakes to teach, he deceives himself and all who depend on him--both will fall into the ditch together.

If an individual teaches the gospel with the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, he will be understood. He may understand the gospel himself yet not make his hearers understand it, because the Holy Spirit is not on them as well as himself. But if the Spirit of God is on them, precisely in proportion as he himself understands the real meaning of the gospel, he will make his hearers understand it.

In preaching the gospel, ministers should never use texts unless its meaning has been taught by the Spirit of God. It is presumption. And there is no excuse for it, for they can always have the teachings of the Spirit. God is more ready to bestow divine illumination than an earthly

parent is to give bread to his child. If they ask, they will always receive all the light they need. This is applicable both to preachers and teachers. If any of them attempt to teach the Scriptures without being themselves taught, they are no more fit to teach than the most ignorant person in the streets is fit to teach astronomy.

I fear that most ministers and teachers have understood very little of their need of this divine teaching or the necessity of praying over their sermons and Bible lessons. If this was done as it should be, their instructions would be far more effective than we now see them.

Do you Bible and Sunday school teachers believe this? Are you in the habit of seeking the true idea of every lesson on your knees? Or do you go to some commentary and them come and peddle out your dry stuff to your classes without the Holy Spirit? If you do this, let me tell you, you had better be doing something else.

What would you say about a minister who never prayed over his texts? You might as well have Balaam's donkey for a minster: the dumb beast might speak with a man's voice and rebuke the madness of such a man. He could give just as much available instruction to reach the deep fountains of the heart as such a preacher. And this is just as important for a Sunday School teacher as for a minster. If you do not pray over your lesson until you feel that God has taught you the idea contained in it, beware! Never be satisfied with anything from a book until you are satisfied that God has put you in possession of the very idea He would have you receive.

THE AUTHOR OF HOLINESS

When I studied theology, I spent many hours on my knees--perhaps I might say weeks--with the Bible before me, laboring and praying to understand the mind of the Spirit. I don't say this boastingly but as a matter fact to show that the sentiment here advanced is no novel opinion with me. And I always get my texts and sermons on my knees. Yet I am conscious that I have gained little knowledge compared with what I might have had if I had taken hold of the source of light as I ought to have done.

How little knowledge most Christians have respecting the Word of God! Ask them, for instance, to read the epistles or other parts, and they

probably won't be able to give an opinion as to the real meaning of one-tenth of the Bible. No wonder the Church is not holy! They need more truth. Our Savior said, "Sanctify them through thy truth" (John 17:17). This means of holiness must be more richly enjoyed before the Church knows what entire sanctification means. They don't understand the Bible.

They have not gone to the Author to have it explained. Although they have the blessed privilege every day--just as often as they choose--of carrying the book to the Author for His explanation, yet how little they know of the Bible they are sure has been taught by the Holy Spirit! Read the text again, or read similar passages, and then try and tell me that Christians are not responsible for understanding the Bible.

We must all study the Bible under divine teaching. I recommend several books for you to read, such as Wesley's Thoughts on Christian Perfection and the memoirs of Brainerd, Taylor, and Payson. I have found that, in a certain state of mind, such books are useful to read.

But I only study one book. I read the others occasionally but have little time or inclination to read many books because I have so much to learn in my Bible. I find it like a deep mine--the more I work it, the richer it grows. We must read, pause, and pray over it verse by verse. We must dwell on it, digest it, and get it into our minds until we feel that the Spirit of God has filled us with the spirit of holiness.

Will you lay your hearts open to God and give Him no rest until He has filled you with divine knowledge? Will you search the Scriptures? I have often been asked by young converts and young men preparing for the ministry what they should read. I give the same answer every time: Study the Bible!

HOLINESS AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

1. Divine _____ is _____ to enlighten and _____ the _____ of men.

2. Do we need _____ to attain the ends of the Gospel? _____

3. If _____ on this question, we will be _____ on all the subjects that _____

concern our _____.

4. Human understanding is _____ of knowing the whole circle of _____

as a system of _____ to be _____ and _____,
on evidence, like any other _____.

5. What cannot attain any knowledge that will produce a sanctifying change? _____

6. Human understanding of the gospel lacks _____ to make it able to avail to _____.

7. For _____ to influence the mind, and the _____ to be _____,

the mind must understand things and excite _____ emotion,
_____ to the object in view.

8. Mere _____ will never _____ the soul to _____.

9. Reasons for _____ must appear strong and vivid and must _____

their _____ and bring them _____ to obey God.
Man can never have this without the _____.

10. All the _____ we can have of the spiritual world are by _____.

11. Words are merely _____ of _____.

12. It is often _____ and sometimes _____

to convey ideas by _____.

13. The _____ of our hearts _____ our _____

and shuts our minds to much that we might _____.

14. A man cannot come to the knowledge of the _____ when his mind is so

_____that he will deny the _____ concerning it.

15. _____ is a great obstacle to the reception of _____

concerning Christianity.

16. The _____ of _____ was sent to put us in _____

of the things that he meant by the _____ He had used in teaching.

17. The general truth is: without _____, men can understand from the Bible enough

to _____ and _____ them, but not enough to _____

and _____ them.

18. The difficulty lies in the _____.

19. The difficulty is in our _____, _____, and the _____ of the subject.

20. The drawing spoken of in John 6:44-45 is _____ by the _____.

21. We need some way in which the _____ can be brought to our _____,

not merely by the signs of the _____.

22. He can reach the mind _____ the use of _____ and can put our minds in

_____ of the ideas themselves.

23. The needed _____ of the Spirit of God may be possessed by _____,

_____, under the _____.

24. Why don't men have as much divine illumination as they need? _____

25. God gives _____ through the _____.

26. Many people don't _____ illumination from the Spirit of God because they _____ him.

27. He is grieved or offended when man _____ on the _____ they receive from

_____, _____, _____ , or their own _____ of _____

28. Men are responsible for what they _____ of _____.

29. ALL men are plainly _____ for not _____ all the knowledge available

for their perfect and _____.

30. Without the Spirit, instruction may convince the Church of _____,

but it will _____ produce _____.

31. What is the medium through which the Spirit of God conveys divine illumination? _____

32. When we use our _____ faculties to understand these things,

we may expect _____ _____ .

33. For the Gospel to be _____, the Holy Spirit must be on

both the _____

and _____.

23. UNFAILING CRYSTAL LOVE
by Charles G. Finney

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law" --Romans 13:10.

The two principal forms of Christian love are benevolence and complacency. Benevolence is an affection of the mind or an act of the will that desires to promote the happiness of its object. Benevolence should be exercised toward all beings, irrespective of their moral character. Complacency is due only to the good and holy.

Love may exist either as an affection or as an emotion. When love is an affection, it is voluntary and consists in the act of the will. When it is an emotion, it is involuntary. They are not directly dependent on the will or controlled by a direct act of will. The virtue of love is mostly in the form of an affection. The happiness of love is mostly in the form of an emotion. If the affection of love is very strong, it produces a high degree of happiness; but the emotion of holy love is happiness itself.

CHOOSING TO LOVE

The emotion of love is involuntary. I don't mean that the will has nothing to do with it, but that it isn't the result of a mere or direct act of the will. No man can exercise the emotion of love by merely willing it. And emotions may often exist in spite of the will. Individuals often feel improper emotions rising in their minds and try to banish them by direct efforts of will. Finding that impossible, they conclude they have no control of these emotions.

But emotions can always be controlled by the will in an indirect way. The mind can bring up any kind of emotion it chooses by directing the attention to the proper object. They will be certain to rise in proportion to the attention fixed upon it, provided the will is right in regard to the object. So, the mind can be rid of improper or disagreeable emotions by turning the attention entirely away from the object and not allowing the thoughts to dwell on it.

Ordinarily, the emotions of love toward God are experienced when we exercise love toward him in the form of affection. But this is not always the case. We may exercise good will toward any object yet at times feel

no sensible emotions of love. It is not certain that even Jesus exercised emotional love toward God at all times. A person can exercise affection and be guided and governed by it in all his actions without any felt emotion.

A husband and father may labor for the benefit of his family, having his very life controlled by affection for them. He may feel no sensible emotions of love for them at the time. His work may take up his mind so much that he has scarcely a thought of them. He may feel no emotion toward them, yet he is guided and governed by affection for them. Again, an affection is an act of the will or a volition.

Love to our neighbor naturally implies the existence of love to God, and love to God naturally implies love to our neighbor: "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another has fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Romans 13:8-9).

Love to our neighbor implies the existence of love to God; otherwise it could not be said that "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." James recognized the same principle, when he says, "If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well" (James 2:8). Here love to our neighbor is spoken of as obedience to the whole law. Benevolence, or good will to our neighbor, naturally implies love to God. So the love of complacency toward holy beings naturally implies love to God, who is a being of infinite holiness.

All that is required of man by God consists in love, in various modifications and results. (See Micah 6:8.) Love is the sum total of all. The Scriptures fully teach that love is the sum total of all the requirements, both of the law and gospel. Our Savior declares that the great command to love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, and your neighbor as yourself, is the sum total of all the law and the prophets. (See Matthew 22:37-40.) It implies and includes all that the Scriptures, the law, and the gospel require.

GOD'S PERFECT LOVE

God is love, and to love is to be like God; and to be perfect in love is to be perfect as God is perfect. All God's attributes consist in love, acting under certain circumstances and for certain ends. God's justice in punishing the wicked, His anger at sin, etc., are only exercises of His love to the general happiness of His Kingdom.

All that is good in man is some modification of love. Hatred of sin is only love of virtue acting itself out in opposing whatever is opposed to virtue. True faith implies and includes love, and faith that has no love in it or does not work by love has no part in Christianity. Christian faith is an affectionate confidence in God.

One kind of faith in God has no love in it. The devil has that kind of faith. The convicted sinner has it. But there is no virtue in it. Faith might even rise to the faith of miracles, yet if there is no love in it, it amounts to nothing. The apostle Paul, in the thirteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians, said, "Though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:2).

Repentance that does not include love is not repentance toward God. True repentance implies obedience to the law of love and, consequently, opposition to sin.

The highest degree of emotion is not essential to perfect love. The Lord Jesus Christ very seldom had the highest degree of emotion, yet He always had perfect love. He generally manifested little emotion or excitement. Excitement always equals the strength of the emotions. The Savior generally remained remarkable calm. Sometimes His indignation was strong or His grief was overwhelming, and sometimes He rejoiced in spirit. But He was usually calm and manifested no high degree of emotion. The emotion of love in a high degree is plainly not essential to perfect love.

The growth of the mind in knowledge naturally implies growth in love. The Lord grew in stature and in favor with God and man. As He grew in knowledge, He grew in love toward God and in favor with God. His love was perfect when He was a child, but it was greater when He became a man. As a human being, Jesus probably continued to increase in love to God as long as He lived. It may be so with all the saints in glory--their perfect love will increase throughout eternity.

In perfect love, love cannot always be exercised toward all individuals alike. You cannot think of everyone you know at once. The degree of love toward an individual depends on the fact that he is present in the thoughts.

The spirit of prayer is not always essential to pure and perfect love. The saints in heaven have pure and perfect love for all beings, yet we do not know if they have the spirit of prayer for anyone. You may love any individual strongly yet not have the spirit of prayer for him. The Spirit of God may not lead you to pray for his salvation. Jesus Christ said expressly that He did not pray for all mankind: "I pray not for the world" (John 17:9).

This has been a great mistake in regard to prayer. Some suppose Christians haven't done their duty if they haven't prayed in faith for every sinner on earth. Then Jesus Christ never did His duty, for He never did this. God has never told us He will save all mankind and never gave us any reason to believe He will do it. How then can we pray in faith for the salvation of all? What does that faith have to rest on?

THE EVIDENCE OF PERFECT LOVE

Excitement exhausts our powers. Although one may feel more like lying down and sleeping than he does like praying, his love may still be perfect. The Lord often felt this weariness and exhaustion.

If perfect love is to reign, there must be nothing in the mind inconsistent with love--no hatred, malice, wrath, envy, or any other negative emotion that are inconsistent with it. All our actions, words, and thoughts must be continually under the entire and perfect control of love.

In perfect love, the love to God is completely supreme, so entirely above all other objects that nothing else is loved in comparison. God is loved for the excellence of His character.

Love to our neighbor should be equal. His interest and happiness should be regarded by us as of equal value with our own, and he and his interests are to be treated accordingly by us.

Perfect love to God and man will certainly create delight in self-denial for the sake of promoting the interests of God's Kingdom and the salvation of sinners. Affectionate parents delight in self-denial for the sake of

promoting the happiness of their children. A loving father labors from year to year, rising early and eating the bread of carefulness to promote the welfare of his family. He counts all his self-denial and toil not as a grief or a burden but as a delight because of love for his family.

Loving parents rejoice more in gifts to their children than they would in enjoying the same things themselves. What parent does not enjoy giving a piece of fruit to his little child more than eating it himself?

The Lord Jesus enjoyed more solid satisfaction in working out salvation for mankind than any of His saints can ever enjoy in receiving favors at His hands. He testifies that it is more blessed to give than to receive. (See Acts 20:35.) This was the joy set before Him for which He endured the cross and despised the shame. His love for mankind was great, and it constrained Him to undertake this work and sustained Him triumphantly through it.

The apostle Paul did not count it grief to be hunted from place to place, imprisoned, scourged, stoned, and counted the offscouring of all things for the sake of spreading the gospel and saving souls. It was his joy. The love of Christ so constrained Him that it was his highest delight to lay himself on that altar as a sacrifice.

Other individuals have had the same mind as the apostle. They would be willing to live to the end of time if they could do good, promote the Kingdom of God, and save the souls of men.

Perfect love leads a person to obey God not because he fears the wrath of God or hopes to be rewarded but because he loves God and loves to do His will. Two extremes exist on this subject. One class makes virtue to consist in doing right simply because it is right, without any reference to the will of God or any influence from His love. Another class makes virtue to consist in acting from love to the employment, without reference to God's authority as Ruler and Law-giver. Both of these are in error.

To do a thing simply because one thinks it right is not virtue. Neither is it virtue to do a thing because one loves to do it, with no regard to God's will. A woman might do something because she knew it would please her husband. But if she did the same thing because she loved to do it, with no regard to her husband, it wouldn't be virtue as it respects her husband. If a person loves God, as soon as he knows God's will, he will

do it because it is God's will. Perfect love leads to universal obedience to God's will in all things because it is His will.

DYING TO THE WORLD

The individual who exercises perfect love will be dead to the world. He will be cut loose from the influence of worldly considerations. Perfect love will so annihilate selfishness that he will have no will but the will of God and no interest but God's glory.

A loving wife will cut loose from her friends as if she were dead to them and not pay the least regard to what they say. She will leave all the riches, honors, and delights they can offer to join the husband whom she loves and live with him in poverty, disgrace, or exile. Her affection is so great that she will joyfully go from a palace to a cave and be perfectly happy. And all that her friends can say against the man of her affection only makes her cling more closely to him.

This one all-absorbing affection has actually killed all the influences that used to act on her. To attempt to influence her by such things is vain. Only one avenue can approach her mind, and only one class of motives move her--and that is through the object of her affection.

The perfect love of God operates in the same way. A mind filled with perfect love is impossible to divert from God. Take away his worldly possessions, his friends, his good name, or his children; send him to prison, beat him with stripes, bind him to the stake, fill his flesh full of pine knots, and set him on fire; and then leave him his God, and his is happy. His strong affection can make him insensible to everything else. It is as is he were dead to the world.

Cases have been known of martyrs who, while their bodies were frying at the stake, were so perfectly happy in God that they lost the sense of pain. Put such a one in hell, in the lake of fire and brimstone, and, as long as the love of God fills his soul, he is happy.

We have all witnessed or heard of cases of affection where a person lives only for a loved object. Sometimes parents live for an only child, and when that child dies, they wish themselves dead. Sometimes a husband and wife have such an absorbing affection for each other that they live for nothing else. If the husband dies, the wife pines away and dies also. The soul-absorbing object for which she lived is gone, and why should she

live any longer?

When an individual is filled with the perfect love of God, he wishes to live only to love and serve God. He is dead to the world and his own reputation. He has no desire to live for any other reason--here, in heaven, or anywhere else in the universe--than to glorify God. He is willing to live anywhere and suffer throughout eternity if it will glorify God.

I often heard a friend say, "I would never think of living a single moment for any purpose other than to glorify God, any more than I should think of leaping right into hell." This was said soberly and deliberately, and his whole life corresponded with the declaration. He was intelligent, sober-minded, and honest, and I have no doubt that he expressed what had been his fullest conviction for years.

What was this but perfect love? What more does any angel in heaven do than this? His love may be greater in degree because his strength is greater. But the highest angel could not love more perfectly than to sincerely say, "I would rather leap into hell than live one moment for anything besides glorifying God." What more could Jesus Himself say?

THE FRUIT OF LOVE

Perfect joy and peace are the natural results of perfect love. Turn your attention to what Paul says in the thirteenth chapter of first Corinthians. The word translated charity means love: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am becoming as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1-2). He might have enough faith to move mountains from their everlasting foundations and yet have no love.

"And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:3). You see how far a man can go without love.

"Charity suffereth long." Long-suffering is meekness under opposition or injury. One of the effects of love is to bear great provocations and not retaliate or revile. Love "is kind," or affectionate in all relationships, never harsh, rude, or needlessly giving pain to any. Love "envieth not," never dislikes others because they are more thought of, noticed, honored,

useful, or wise. Love "is not puffed up" with pride but is always humble and modest. (See 1 Corinthians 13:4).

"Love doth not behave itself unseemly" but is naturally pleasant and courteous toward all. However unacquainted the individual may be with the ways of society, if he is motivated by perfect love, it is natural for him to be kind, gentle, and courteous. Love "seeketh not her own" or has no selfishness, and "is not easily provoked." This is always the effect of love. A loving mother bears with her children because she loves them. (See verse 5.) If you see an individual that easily plies into a passion when anything goes wrong, he is by no means perfect in love. To be easily provoked is always a sign of pride. If a person is full of love, it is impossible to make him exercise sinful anger while love continues. He exercises such indignation as God exercises at what is base and wrong, but he will not be provoked by it.

Love "thinketh no evil" (verse 5). Show me a man who is always suspicious of the motives of others, forever criticizing the words and actions of his fellowmen, and I will show you one who has the devil in him, not the Holy Spirit. If an individual is honest and simple-hearted, he will be the last to think evil of others. On the contrary, such people are often easy to take advantage of. Not from any lack of good sense but from the effect of love. They don't suspect evil.

Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth" (verse 6.) A man who exults at his neighbor's fall or cries out, "I told you so" is far from being perfect in love.

"Love beareth all things," all injustices and injuries, without revenge. Love "believeth all things" instead of doubting what is in favor of others, always ready to believe good wherever there is the least evidence of it. Love "hopeth all things," even where there is reason to suspect evil. As long as there is room for hope, love puts the best construction upon the things it will bear (verse 7).

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor" (Romans 13:10). No ill! Perfect love never overreaches, defrauds, oppresses, or does any wrong to a neighbor. How can a man who hates or injures his neighbor pretend to love God?

James says, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth

not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26). The man that professes Christianity yet allows himself to speak against his neighbor with an unbridled tongue deceives himself if he thinks he loves his neighbors as himself.

TRUE CHRISTIAN ZEAL

People often intellectually understand about the Lord and can share it with others, while it is plain they are not motivated by the spirit of love. They do not have the law of kindness of their lips.

Individuals who have great religious knowledge and zeal, without love, are unlovely and dangerous. They are always censorious, proud, heady, and high-minded. They may make a strong impression but don't produce true Christianity. They zealously affect you but not well.

If the light in a man's mind is accompanied with love, his zeal will not be sectarian in its character. Show me a man full of jealousy toward those that don't belong to his denomination, and there is a man far from perfect love.

True love is never denunciatory or harsh. If it has occasion to speak of the faults of others, it does it in kindness and sorrow. Perfect love cannot speak in a rough or abusive manner, either to or of others. It will not lay great stress on the ceremonies of religion or be picky about particular measures or forms. Many contend fiercely either for or against certain things, but if they were full of love they wouldn't do it.

Zeal governed by perfect love will not spend itself in contending for or against any forms in religion. Love leads to laying stress on the fundamentals of Christianity. It cleaves to warm-hearted Christians, regardless of their denomination, and delights to associate with them.

True Christian zeal is never full of controversy. Find a man who loves to attend ecclesiastical meetings and enters into all the janglings of the day, and that man is not full of love. To a mind fulled with holy love, it is exceedingly painful to see ministers dividing into parties and striving for the mastery. Find an individual who loves controversy in the newspaper, and he is not of love. If he was, he would rather be abused, reviled, and slandered than to defend himself or to reply. As much as possible, he would live peacefully with all men.

Much of what passes for works of Christianity is constrained by outward causes and influences instead of love. Unless love is the mainspring, no matter what the outward action may be--praying, praising, giving, or anything else--there is no truth in it. Much excitement that passes for Christianity has no love.

Religious excitements not grounded in the spirit of love aren't true revivals. People may be excited and bustle about with a great show of zeal and boisterous noise but still have no tenderness of spirit.

I once knew a young man who acknowledged that he aimed at making people angry. He thought that it brought them under conviction and led to their conversion. And so it might if he should go in and utter horrid blasphemies until they were frightened into a consideration of their own character. But who would defend such conduct on the ground that occasionally someone got saved?

If the character of the revival is wrath, malice, and uncharitableness, it is not Christianity. I do not mean that when some or many are "filled with wrath" it is certain evidence that there is no revival. But when the excitement has this prevailing character, it is not true revival. But certainly those filled with a bitter, malicious zeal are not Christians.

WHEN LOVE REIGNS

If love is not the ruling feature in a person's character, he is not truly converted. However well he appears in other respects, and no matter how clear his views or how deep his feelings, if he doesn't have the spirit of love to God and man, he is deceived.

The time will come when there will be nothing to hurt or destroy, and the spirit of love will universally prevail. What a change in society! What a change in all the methods of doing business and in all the relationships of mankind. Each man will love his neighbor as himself and seek the good of others as his own! Could one of the saints that live now revisit the earth in that day, he would not know the world--everthing will be so altered. "Is it possible," he would exclaim, "that this is the same earth that used to be full of jangling, oppression, and fraud?"

The Lord Jesus Christ is working to bring all men under the influence of love. Is this not a worthy objective? He came to destroy the works of the devil, and this is the way to do it. Suppose the world was full of such men

as Jesus Christ was in His human nature. Compare it with what it is now. Would not such a change be worthy of the Son of God? What a glorious end, to fill the earth with love!

Heaven is love--perfect love. It is easy to see what makes heaven on earth in those who are full of love. How sweet their temper, what delightful companions, how blessed to live near them and to associate with them. They are full of candor, kind, gentle, careful to avoid offense, and divinely amiable in all things!

Is this to be attained by men? Can we love God here in this world with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind? Is it our privilege and our duty to have the Spirit of Christ? Beloved, let our hearts be set on perfect love, and let us give God no rest until we feel our hearts full of love and all our thoughts and lives are full of love to God and man.

When will the Church come up to this standard? Let the Church be full of love, and she will be fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible to all wickedness.

24. RESTING IN OBEDIENCE
by Charles G. Finney

"For we which have believed do enter into rest" --Hebrews 4:3.

The apostle who wrote this was very active in the Church. Those of whom he spoke, including himself-"we who have believed do enter into rest"-would know at once they had not entered into the rest of inactivity.

Neither are we to understand that the perfect rest of heaven is the rest here spoken of. He speaks of it as a present state: "we do enter." The perfect rest of heaven includes absolute freedom from all the pains, trials, sufferings, and temptations of this life. The rest of the believer here may be of the same nature, substantially, with the rest in heaven. But that rest begun on earth is not made perfect. It differs because it does not deliver from all trials, pains, sickness, and death. The apostles and early Christians did not escape these trials but still suffered their full share of them.

The word rest is often used in the Bible. The children of Israel rested when they were freed from their enemies and strife of war. Those who

enter into this rest cease from their warfare with God, their struggle against the truth, and their war with their own conscience. The reproaches of conscience that kept them in agitation and the slavish fears of the wrath of God are done away with. They rest.

CEASING FROM SELFISH WORKS

Much religion in the world is made up of people's own works. They are working for their own lives--that is, they are working for themselves as absolutely as the man laboring for his bread. If the object of your faith is your own salvation, it doesn't matter whether it is from temporal or eternal ruin, it is for yourself. You have not ceased from your own works but are still multiplying them.

The rest spoken of in the text is entire cessation from this kind of works. The apostle affirms this: "He that is entered into his rest, hath ceased from his own works" (Hebrews 4:10). And in the text, he says, "We that believe do enter," or have entered, "into rest."

This rest is ceasing from our own works, not ceasing from all kind of works, for that is true neither of the saints on earth nor the saints in heaven. We have no reason to believe that any saint, angel, or God Himself is ever inactive. But we cease to perform works merely to save our own souls. By ceasing to work for ourselves we can work for God. If the question of our salvation is thrown entirely on Jesus Christ and our works are performed our of love to God, they are not our own works.

In entering into this rest, we cease from all works performed from ourselves as well as works performed for ourselves. Works are from ourselves when they result from the simple, natural principles of human nature, such as conscience, hope, fear, etc., without the influences of the Holy Spirit. Such works are universally and wholly sinful. They are the efforts of selfishness, under the direction of mere natural principles. Our conscience convicts us, and hope and fear come to our aid. Under this influence, the carnal, selfish mind acts.

People who practice their own righteousness painfully grind out religion, constrained by hope and fear, lashed to the work by conscience. They haven't the least impulse from that divine principle of the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit. All such works are just as much from themselves as any work of any devil is. No matter what kind

of works are performed, if the love of God is not the mainspring, life, and heart, then they are dead and provide no rest. These works set aside the gospel.

The individual who is actuated by these principles sets aside the gospel, in whole or in part. If he is motivated only by these considerations, he sets aside the gospel entirely. As far as he is influenced by them, he refuses to receive Christ as his Savior in that relation. Christ is offered as a complete Savior --our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. If anyone dispenses with the Savior in any of these functions, he is setting aside the gospel in proportion.

To enter into rest implies that we cease from doing anything for ourselves. We re not even to eat or drink for ourselves: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). God requires it, and he that has entered into rest has ceased to have any interest of his own. He has wholly merged his own interest in that of Christ. He has given himself so perfectly to Christ that he has no work of his own to do. He might as well sit still until he is in hell as attempt to save himself by his own exertions. When a man fully understands this, he ceases from making any efforts in this way. The convicted sinner will strain to help himself until he learns that he is nothing. Then he ceases from all this and throws himself, helpless and lost, into the hands of Christ.

Until he feels that in himself he is without strength, help, or hope for salvation, he will never think of the simplicity of the gospel. No man applies to Christ for righteousness and strength until he has used up his own and feels that he is helpless and undone. Then he can understand the simplicity of the gospel plan, which consists in receiving salvation by faith, as a free gift. When he has done all that he could and finds that he is no nearer salvation and that sin is multiplied upon sin, he is crushed down with utter helplessness and gives all into the hand of Christ.

YIELDING YOURSELF TO JESUS

Everyone who has entered into rest knows that whatever he does in his own strength is an abomination to God. Unless Christ lives in him to will and to do His good pleasure, nothing is ever done acceptably to God. He who has not learned this has not ceased from his own works and has not accepted the Savior. The depth of depravity to which sin has reduced us

is not understood until we know we are not able to work for ourselves.

Jesus invites us to throw all our burdens and cares on Him. "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

These words mean just as they say. Whether your burden is temporal or spiritual, whether your care is for the soul or body, throw it all upon the Lord.

Imagine a little child walking with his father. The father is carrying something that is heavy, and the child takes hold with his little hand to help. But how can he carry such a load? Many Christians cause a great deal of trouble by trying to help the Lord in His work. They weary and worry themselves as if everything hung on their shoulders.

Jesus Christ is as much pledged to the believer for all that concerns him as He is for his justification. The Lord is as absolutely bound for his temporal as for his eternal interests. Everything that concerns the Christian can be cast on the Lord. I do not mean that the Christian has no responsibility in the matter. A man who has cast his family upon Jesus must still be concerned for his family. But he has cast himself upon God for direction, light, strength, and success. He has yielded himself up absolutely to God to guide and sustain him, and Christ will see that everything is done right.

Entering into Jesus' rest implies the yielding up of our powers so perfectly to His control that from that point all our works will be His works. I hope you will not understand anything from this language more mystical than the Bible intends. What a man does by another, he does himself. If I hire a man to commit murder, the deed is as absolutely my own as if I had done it with my own hand. The crime is not in the hand which struck the blow any more than it is in the knife that stabs the victim. The crime is in my mind. Even if I use another's hand, my mind influenced him, and it is still my act.

Apply this principle to the doctrine that the individual who has entered into rest has yielded himself up to Christ's control, and all his works are the works of Jesus. The apostle Paul says, "I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1

Corinthians 15:10). He frequently insists that it was not himself that did the works but Christ in him.

Do not misunderstand it now. Do no think that the believer acts upon compulsion or that Christ acts in him without his own will. But Christ, by His Spirit dwelling in him, influences and leads his mind so that he acts voluntarily to please God.

When one ceases from his own works, he so perfectly gives up his own interest and will and places himself under the dominion and guidance of the Holy Spirit that whatever he does is done by the impulse of the Spirit of Christ. Paul describes it exactly: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12-13).

God influences the will, not by force but by love, to do what will please Him. If it was done by force, we would no longer be free agents. But it is love that sweetly influences the will and brings it entirely under the control of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our free will isn't suspended but is employed by the Lord Jesus Christ. Our hands, feet, and powers of body and mind are all employed to work for Him. He does not suspend the laws of our constitution but directs us, and the love of Christ constrains us to will and do of His good pleasure.

All works that are really good in man are, in an important sense, Christ's works. Over and over the Bible affirms that our good words are not from ourselves or in any way by our own action without God. God directs us and influences our will to do His. They are in one sense our works, because we do them voluntarily. Yet, in another sense, they are His works because He is the moving cause of all.

Insomuch as we yield our will to Christ, to that degree we cease from sin. If we are directed by the Lord, He will not direct us to sin. Just as far as we give ourselves up to God we cease from sin. If we are controlled by Him, so that He works in us, it is to will and to do of His good pleasure.

THE TRUE REST OF FAITH

Believers enter into rest in this life. This appears from the text and context. The author of Hebrews, in connection with the text, was reasoning with the Jews. He warns them to beware unless they fail to

enter into the true rest, typified by their fathers' entering into the land of Canaan. The Jews supposed that was the true rest. But the author argues that there was a higher rest of which the rest of temporal Canaan was only a type. The Jews might have entered this rest except for their unbelief.

If Joshua had given them the real rest, he would not have spoken of another day. Yet another day is spoken of. Even in David's day it is spoken of in the Psalms as yet to come: "To day, after so long a time; as it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. For if Jesus (That is Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day. There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God" (Hebrews 4:7-9).

He therefore argues that the rest in Canaan was not the real rest promised but was typical of the true rest. What then was the true rest? It was the rest of faith in Christ, a cessation from our own works. And believers enter into that state by faith.

Many people suppose that the rest spoken of is the heavenly rest beyond this life. But it is certainly a rest that begins here. "We which believe do enter into rest." It begins here but extends into eternity. There it will be more perfect in degree, embracing freedom from the sorrows and trials to which all believers are subject in this life. But it is the same rest of faith, the Sabbath-keeping of the soul when it ceases from its own works and casts itself upon the Savior.

Faith is essential to taking possession of this rest. The author of Hebrews warns them not to indulge in unbelief, because by faith they may take immediate possession of the rest. If this rest by faith ever begins at all, it must be in this world. Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28-29). We are told that if we will only come to Christ, we will find rest. If we will take His yoke of love and trust Him to bear all our burdens, we will find rest.

The psalmist speaks of the same rest: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul" (Psalm 116:7). What Christian does not know what it is to have peace in Christ and find rest from all the cares, perplexities, and sorrows of life?

Faith in Christ brings the soul into rest. Faith instantly breaks up slavish fear and brings the soul into the liberty of the gospel! It sets us free from selfishness and other influences we formerly acted under. By faith we confide in Christ to lead us, sanctify us, and justify us. The soul sees no need for its own selfish efforts. In itself, the soul is so far gone in sin that it is as hopeless as if it had been in hell a thousand years. Take the best Christian on earth--if the Lord leaves his soul, where is he? Will he pray or do anything good or acceptable to God without Christ? Never. The greatest saint on earth would immediately go right back into sin if abandoned by Jesus Christ. But faith throws all upon Christ, and that is rest.

PRINCIPLES OF FAITH

Faith makes us cease from all works for ourselves. By faith we see that we have no more need of doing works for ourselves than the child whose father is worth millions needs to work for his daily bread. He may work out of love to his father or love to his job, but not from any necessity to labor for his daily bread. The soul that truly understands the gospel sees no need of mingling his own righteousness with the righteousness of Christ, his wisdom with the wisdom of Christ, or his own sufferings with the sufferings of Christ. If there was any need of this, there would be much temptation to selfishness and working from legal motives. But there is none.

By faith the soul ceases from all works performed from itself. Faith brings a new principle into action, entirely above all considerations addressed to the natural principles of hope, fear, and conscience. Faith brings the mind under the influence of love. It takes the soul from under the influences of conscience and brings it under the influence of the same holy, heavenly principle that influenced Jesus Himself.

Faith brings the mind into rest and brings it to cease from all efforts merely for its own salvation, putting the whole being into the hands of Christ.

Faith is confidence, yielding up all our power and interests to Christ to be led, sanctified, and saved by Him. It annihilates selfishness and thus leaves no motives from our own works.

Faith is an absolute resting of the soul in Jesus for all that it needs or can

need. It is trusting Him for everything. If a little child didn't trust his father, he would be miserable. He is absolutely dependent on his father for house, food, clothing, and everything under the sun. Yet that little child feels no uneasiness because he confides in his father. He rests in him and is sure he will provide. He is as cheerful and happy as if he had all things in himself because he has confidence.

The soul of the believer rests in Christ just as the infant does in the arms of its mother. The penitent sinner, like a condemned wretch, clings to Christ without the least help or hope. Only when he comes to Christ alone will He do all that is needed.

If faith does consist in this trusting absolutely in Christ, then it is true that this rest is taken possession of when we believe. It must be in this life, if faith is to be exercised in this life.

Unbelief is the cause of all the sin in the world. Unbelief, itself a sin, is the fountain out of which all other sin flows. It is distrust in God or a lack of confidence. This lack of confidence constituted Adam's real crime, not the mere eating of the fruit. The distrust that led to the outward act constituted the real crime, for which he was cast out of Paradise.

The moment an individual lacks faith and is left to the simple influence of natural principles and appetites, he is like a beast. The things that address his mind through the sense alone influence him. The motives that influence the mind when it acts right are discerned by faith. Where there is no faith, there are no motives before the mind except those confined to this world. The soul is then left to give itself up to the flesh.

This is the natural and inevitable result of unbelief. The eye is shut to eternal things, and nothing before the mind is calculated to beget anything but selfishness. Left to grovel in the dust, it can never rise above its own interest and appetites; for how can the mind act without motives? But the motives of eternity are seen only by faith. Mere mental and bodily appetites can never raise the mind above the things of this world, and the result is sin--the minding of the flesh forever. The very moment Adam distrusted God, he was given up to follow his appetites. And it is so with all other minds.

Suppose a child loses all confidence in his father. He can now give no heartfelt obedience. If he pretends to obey, it is only from selfishness and

not from the heart. The mainspring and essence of all loving obedience is gone. It will be so in heaven; it is so in hell. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We cannot obey God and be accepted by Him without faith. Unbelief is the foundation of all the sin in earth and hell, and the soul that is void of faith is left to work out its own damnation.

RESTING IN JESUS

Perfect faith would produce perfect love and perfect holiness, if we would yield ourselves up and trust all that we have and are to Christ. If an individual is not sanctified, his faith is weak.

When Jesus was on earth, if His disciples fell into sin, He always reproached them for a lack of faith: "O ye of little faith," (See Matthew 6:30, 8:26; Luke 12:28; Mark 4:40; etc.) A man that believes in Christ has no more right to expect to sin than he has a right to expect to be damned. You may startle at this, but it is true.

You are to receive Christ as your holiness just as absolutely as for your justification. You should expect to be damned unless you receive Christ as your justification. But if you receive Him, you have no reason and no right to expect to be damned. If you depend upon Him for sanctification, He will no more let you sin than He will let you go to hell. And it is as unreasonable, unscriptural, and wicked to expect one as the other. Nothing but unbelief, in any instance, is the cause of your sin.

Take the case of Peter. When the disciples saw Jesus walking upon the water, Peter requested permission to come to Him on the water. Christ told him to come. Jesus' invitation was a promise that, if Peter attempted it, he would be sustained. Except for this promise, his attempt would have been tempting God. But with this promise, he had no reason and no right to doubt. He made the attempt; and while he believed, Jesus' energy bore him up. But as soon as he began to doubt, he began to sink.

As soon as the soul begins to doubt the willingness and the power of Christ to sustain it in a state of perfect love, it begins to sink. Take Jesus at Him Word, make Him responsible, and rely on Him. Heaven and earth will sooner pass away than He will ignore a soul falling into sin.

A state of inaction is inconsistent with Christian rest. How could it be rest for one whose heart was burning and bursting with love to God and to souls to sit and do nothing? But it is perfect rest for the soul to burn in

prayer and effort for their salvation. Such a soul cannot rest while God is dishonored, souls destroyed, and nothing is done for their rescue. But when all his powers are used for the Lord Jesus Christ, this is true rest. Such is the rest enjoyed by angels, who never cease, day or night, and who are all ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation.

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1).

Do any of you know what it is to come to Christ and rest in Him? Have you found rest from all your own efforts to save yourselves from the thunders of Sinai and the stings of conscience? Can you rest sweetly in Jesus and find everything essential to holiness and eternal salvation in Him? Have you found actual salvation in Him?

If you have, then you have entered into rest. If you have not found this, it is because you are still laboring to perform your own works.

RESTING IN OBEDIENCE

1. The rest spoken of is not the rest of _____.

2. Neither is it the _____ rest of _____ because he speaks of it as a_____ state.

3. The perfect rest of heaven includes _____ from all the _____,

_____, _____ and _____ of this life.

4. Compared with heaven, the rest of the believer here may be substantially of the same _____.

5. Those who enter THIS rest:

A. _____ from their warfare with _____ .

B. Cease from their _____ against the _____ .

C. _____ from their war with their own _____ .

6. Two things are done away with: The _____ of conscience that kept them in

_____, and the slavish _____ of the _____ of God.

7. If the _____ of faith is your own _____, you have not ceased

from your own _____, but are still _____ them.

8. The rest spoken of in the text is _____ from this _____ of works.

9. This rest is ceasing from our _____. We cease to _____

MERELY _____ our own _____.

10. When are our works NOT our OWN works? When the question of our _____

11. Works are from ourselves when they result from the _____, _____ principles of human nature,

such as _____, without the _____ of the Holy Spirit.
Such works are _____ and WHOLLY _____.

12. The carnal, selfish mind acts when influenced by the conviction of _____.

13. To enter into _____ implies that we cease from _____for ourselves. That is, he has

_____himself so perfectly to _____ that he has no work of _____ to do.

14. Until one feels that in _____ he is without

_____, _____, or

_____ for salvation, he will NEVER _____ of the _____ of the Gospel.

15. The depth of _____ to which _____ has reduced us is not _____

until we know we are not able to _____ for _____.

16. Entering into _____ implies the yielding up of our powers so perfectly to His

_____ that from that point, _____ our works will be His _____.

17. Do NOT _____ it now. The believer never acts upon _____, neither does

Christ act in him _____ his own _____.

18. BUT _____, by His Spirit _____ in the believer, _____

and _____ his MIND so that he acts _____ to _____GOD.

19. God influences the _____, not by _____ but by _____.

20. Is our free will suspended? _____

21. All works that are really good in man are, in an _____ sense, _____ works.

They are in one sense our works, because we _____. Yet they are His works because He is the _____ .

22. If we are _____ by the Lord, he will not direct us to _____. Just as far as we

_____ up to God, we _____ from _____.

23. The Jews supposed that entering into the _____ of

_____ was the true rest.

However, it was not the real rest promised, but was _____ of the true rest.

24. Believers enter into rest in _____.

25. The true rest is the _____ in _____.

26. That the rest begins here is proved by present tense in the verse: "We which _____ .

27. It can be called the _____-_____ of the soul.

28. Matt 11:28-29 says: _____ .

29. Faith _____ breaks up _____.

30. Faith sets us _____ from_____ and other influences we formerly _____.

31. The soul sees no _____ for its own _____ efforts.

32. Faith makes us _____ from all works _____ ourselves.

33. By faith the soul _____ from all works performed _____ itself.

34. Faith brings the mind under the influence of _____, the same holy,

heavenly principle that _____.

35. Faith is an_____ of the soul in _____ for all that it _____ or can _____

36. The _____ that _____ the mind when it acts right are discerned by _____.

Where there is no faith, there are no _____ before the

_____ except those confined
to this world. The soul is then left to _____ up to the _____.

37. The motives of _____ are seen only by _____. Mere _____

and _____ appetites can _____ raise the _____ above the things
of _____, and the result is -- the _____ of the _____

38. A man that _____ in Christ has no more right to _____ to _____

than he has a right to expect to _____.

39. Nothing but _____, in ANY _____, is the _____ of your _____

40. As soon as the soul begins to _____ the _____ and the _____ of Christ

to _____ it in a state of perfect love, it begins to _____.

41. When all the _____of the believer are used for the Lord Jesus Christ, this is _____ .

25. THE BRIDE OF CHRIST
by Charles G. Finney

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" --Romans 7:4.

Marriage is set forth in the Bible as describing the relationship between Christ and the Church. Jesus is often spoken of as the husband of the Church: "Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name" (Isaiah 54:5). "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am

married unto you" (Jeremiah 3:14).

The Church is spoken of as the bride, the Lamb's wife: "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come" (Revelation 22:17). That is, Christ and the Church say, "Come." The apostle Paul says, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2).

FAITHFUL HUSBANDS AND DEVOTED WIVES

In most marriages, the wife gives up her own name and assumes that of her husband. And the Church assumes the name of Christ and is baptized into His name. A married woman has no separate interest. So the Church has no right to have a separate interest from the Lord Jesus Christ. If a wife has property, it joins with her husband's.

The reputation of the wife is united to that of her husband; his reputation is hers, and her reputation is his. What affects her character affects his; and what affects his character affects hers. Their reputation is one, and their interests are one. Whatever concerns the Church is just as much the interest of Christ as if it were personally His own matter. As the husband of the Church, He is as responsible to do everything necessary to promote the interest of the Church as a husband is responsible to promote the welfare of his wife.

A faithful husband gives up his time, his labor, and his talents to promote the interest and happiness of his wife. Jesus Christ gives Himself up to promote the welfare of His Church. He is as jealous of the reputation of His Church as any husband ever was of the reputation of his wife. Never was a human being as committed and devoted to the interest of his wife as Jesus Christ feels when His Church has her reputation or her feelings injured. He declares that it would be better for a man to hang a millstone around his neck and be cast into the sea than to offend one of His little ones. (See Matthew 18:6.)

Jesus feels all the sufferings of the Church, and the Church feels all the sufferings of Jesus. When a believer has any understanding of the sufferings of Christ, nothing in the universe so affects and dissolves his mind with sorrow. No wife ever felt such distress and brokenhearted grief than when she has caused the death of her husband. The Christian feels this remorse when he views his sins as the occasion of the death of

Jesus Christ. How would you feel if your husband or wife volunteered to suffer and die for you to save your life? Just to be reminded of it would melt you in brokenhearted grief!

Have you ever understood that your sins caused the death of Christ, and that He died for you just as absolutely as if you had been the only sinner in God's world? He suffered pain, contempt, and death for you. He loved His Church and gave Himself for it. He purchased it with His own blood.

In Christians marriages, the wife pledges to yield to the will of her husband. She has no separate interest and should have no conflicting will. The Bible makes it a Christian duty for the wife to conform in all things to the will of her husband. The will of the husband becomes to the faithful wife the mainspring of her activity. Her entire life is only carrying out the will of her husband.

The relationship of the Church to Jesus is precisely the same. The Church is governed by His will. When believers exercise faith, the Lord's will becomes the moving cause of all their conduct. The wife recognizes her husband as her head, and the Bible declares that he is so. The Head governs the Church.

LORD OF THE CHURCH

Every believer places himself as absolutely under the protection of Christ as a married woman is under the protection of her husband. The woman naturally looks to her husband to preserve her from injury, insult, and want. She hangs her happiness on him and expects him to protect her, and he is bound to do it.

Jesus is pledged to protect His Church from every foe. Often the powers of hell have tried to put down the Church, but He has never abandoned it. No weapon formed against the Church has ever been allowed to prosper, and none ever will. Never will the Lord forget His relationship to the Church and leave His bride unprotected. Let all earth and all hell conspire against the Church, and she will be safe.

Every individual believer is as safe as if he were the only believer on earth and has Jesus truly pledged for his preservation. The devil can no more destroy a single believer than he can put down God Almighty. He may murder them, but that is no injury. Overcoming a believer by taking his life gives Satan no triumph. Neither the grave nor hell has any more

power to injure one of the Lord's little ones than they have to injure Jesus Himself.

Jesus says, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). And "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:25-26). No power in the universe can destroy a single believer. Jesus Christ is Lord over all things, and the Church is safe.

Jesus Christ is Lord over His Church, and if He does not restrain His Church from sin, He is brought into great trouble and reproach by the misconduct of His people. by human laws, the husband is not liable for capital crimes committed by the wife, and the law recognized her separate existence.

But Jesus has assumed responsibility for all the Church's conduct. He took the place of His people when they were convicted and sentenced to eternal damnation. And now it is His business to take care of the Church and keep her from sin. Jesus Christ is responsible and must answer for every sin of every member.

And He does answer for them. He has made an atonement to cover all this, and He lives to make intercession for His people. He holds himself responsible before God for all the conduct of the Church. Every believer is so perfectly united to Him that whatever any of them may be guilty of Jesus takes upon Himself. This is abundantly taught in the Bible.

What an amazing relationship! The Lord has assumed the responsibility for all the civil and capital crimes of rebellion against God. There is a sense, therefore, in which the Church is lost in Christ and has no separate existence known in law. God has so given up the Church to Christ, by the covenant of grace, that the Church is not known in law. I do not mean that crimes committed by believers against the moral law are not sin, but the law cannot get hold of them for condemnation. There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. (See Romans 8:1.)

The penalty of the law if forever remitted. The crimes of the believer are not taken into account. Whatever is done falls upon Christ. He has assumed the responsibility of bringing Christians out from under the power of sin, as well as from under the law. He stands pledged to give

His children all the assistance they need to gain a complete victory.

BRINGING FORTH FRUIT

A principal design of the institution of marriage is the propagation of the species. The same is true in regard to the Church. Through the instrumentality of the Church, children are born to Christ, and He is to see His seed multiplied as the drops of morning dew. Through both the travail of the Redeemer's soul and trough the travail of the Church, believers are born to Jesus Christ. As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth children.

Another object of the marriage institution is the protection and support of those who are naturally helpless and dependent. If the law of power prevailed in society, females would be universally enslaved. The institution of marriage secures protection and support of those who are more frail. Jesus upholds His Church and affords her all the protection against the powers of hell that she needs.

The mutual happiness of the parties is another reason for marriage. Perhaps you will think it strange if I tell you that the happiness of Christ is increased by the love of the Church. But what does the Bible say? "Who for the joy set before Him endured the corss, despising the shame" (Hebrews 12:2). What was the joy set before Him if the love of the Church was not a part of it? It would be strange to hear of a husband contributing to the happiness of his wife without enjoying it himself. Jesus Christ enjoys the happiness of His Church as much as He loves her--which is infinitely greater than any husband loves his wife.

Sharing each other's sorrow is a great relief. Jesus Christ and His Church share each other's sorrows. The apostle Paul says he was always bearing about in his body the dying of the Lord Jesus: "For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (2 Corinthians 1:5). And he declared that one end of all his toils and self-denials was that he might "know . . . the fellowship of his sufferings" (Philippians 3:10). Paul rejoiced in all his sufferings. The Church keenly feels every reproach cast upon Christ, and He feels every injury inflicted on the Church.

WHITE ROBES AND ADULTERY

The principal reason for this union between Jesus and His church is that

He may sanctify her: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christhead of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their won husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:22-27).

This is the design of Christ in marrying the Church--that He might sanctify and cleanse it, and that is should be perfectly holy and without blemish. In Revelation, John informs us that he saw those who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. How beautifully the Lamb's wife is described in the twenty-first chapter, coming down from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Vast multitudes of those who profess to be a part of the Bride of Christ are hypocrites. They pretend to merge their self-interest with Christ's but obviously keep a separate interest. Any attempt to make them understand that they have no separate interest will plainly show that they have so such design.

Everybody knows what an abominable thing it is for a wife not to be satisfied with the love of her husband but continually seeking other lovers. Yet the Church is not satisfied with the love of Christ and always seeks after other lovers. What are we to think of members of the Church who are not satisfied with the love of Christ but must have the riches and honors of the world to make them happy?

Still more horrible would be a wife who chose her lovers from the enemies of her husband and made them her chosen friends. Yet how many professing Christians give their affections to Christ's enemies? Some will even marry those whom they know are haters of God! Is that the way a bride should act?

Everyone knows that it is a disgraceful think for a wife to play the harlot. Yet God often speaks of His Church as going astray and committing spiritual whoredom! And it is true! He doesn't make this charge unjustly. But He makes it with tender grief and pleads with her to return.

What would you think of a married woman who expected, at the very time of her marriage, to get tired of her husband, leave him, and play the harlot?

Many "Christians," when they made a profession, had no more expectation of living without sin than they expected to have wings and fly. They have come into God's house, pledged themselves to live entirely for Him, and married Him in this public manner. They promised to forsake all sin, to live alone for Christ, to be satisfied with His love, and to have no other lovers--yet the whole time they are doing it, in their minds they expect to commit sin and dishonor Christ.

What are we to think of a woman who, at the very time of her marriage, expected to continue in adultery as long as she lives, in spite of all the commands and protests of her husband? Then what are we to think of "Christians" who deliberately expect to commit spiritual adultery and continue in it as long as they live?

But the most abominable part of such a wife's wickedness is when she turns around and blames her conduct upon her faithful husband! The Church does this. Although Christ has done all that He could do, short of absolute force, to keep His Church from sinning, the Church charges her sin upon Him. They act as if He hasn't made adequate provisions for preserving His people against temptation.

They are horrified at the very name of Christian perfection, as if it were dishonoring Christ to believe that He is able to keep His people from committing sin and falling into the snare of the devil. And so for hundreds of years the greater part of the Church has not taught that Jesus Christ really has provided a way for His people to live free from sin. People wonder that anybody teaches that the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ is expected to do as she is commanded to do. Has He married a Bride and made no provision to protect her against the arts and seductions of the devil!

JESUS' LOVING PATIENCE

The reputation of husband and wife are one. Whatever dishonors one, dishonors the other. The Church, instead of avoiding every appearance of evil, continually opens opportunities for the enemies of God to blaspheme the Lord.

What other husband, in such circumstances, could suffer to remain and bear what Jesus bears? Yet he still offers to be reconciled and strives to regain the affection of His Bride. Sometimes a husband loses his affection toward his wife and treats her like a brute, and she loses her love for him. But where can anything be found in the character and conduct of Jesus to justify the treatment He receives? He has laid Himself out to capture the affections of the Church.

What more could He have done? Can any fault or any deficiency be found in Him? After everything the Church has done against Him, what is he doing now? Suppose a husband should for years follow his wandering, guilty wife from city to city beseeching her with tears to return home, and she persists after her lovers while he continues to cry after her and bid her to come back. Is there any such forbearance and humility known among men?

Your sins dishonor, grieve, and injure Christ--and then you make Him responsible for them. You sustain such a relationship to Him, and you ought to know the effect of your sin.

How does a wife feel when she has disgraced her husband? Blushes cover her face and tears fill her eyes! When her offended husband comes into her presence, she falls down with a full heart, confesses her guilt, and pours tears onto his shoulder. She is grieved and humbled; and, although she loves him, his very presence is a grief until she breaks down and feels he has forgiven her.

How can a Christian fail to recognize this? When he is betrayed into sin and has injured Jesus, how can he sleep? How can you not know that your sins take hold of Jesus Christ and wound Him!

If an individual expect to live in sin, of course he will live in sin. Many professing Christians never really meant to live without sin. Paul insists that believers should consider themselves dead to sin. (See Romans 6:11.) They should from now on no more expect to sin than a dead man should expect to walk. They should throw themselves upon Christ, receive Him in all His functions, and expect to be preserved, sanctified, and saved by Him. If they would do this, they would be kept from sin just as certainly as they believe in Christ for it!

To believe that Jesus will keep them insures that He will. The reason

many Christians do not receive preserving grace at all times is that they do not expect it or trust Jesus to preserve them in perfect love. The man tries to preserve himself. Instead of throwing himself upon Christ, he throws himself upon his own resources. Then in his weakness he expects to sin--of course he sins! If he knew his own emptiness and would throw himself upon Christ, he would rest confidently for holiness and justification.

JESUS IS OUR HOLINESS

No one who trusted God for anything He has promised has ever failed to receive, according to his faith, the very thing for which he trusted. If you trust God for what He has not promised, this is tempting God.

If Peter had not been called to come out on the water, it would have been tempting God for him to get out of the ship. He would have lost his life for his presumption and folly. But as soon as Christ told him to come, it was merely an act of sound and rational faith for him to do it. It was a pledge on the part of Christ that Peter would be sustained--and he was sustained, as long as he had faith.

If the Bible has promised that those who receive Christ as their sanctification will be sanctified, then you who believe in Him for this have just as much reason to expect it as Peter had to expect to walk on water. We do not expect miracles to sustain the believer. But it is promised that he will be sustained, and God would move the universe and turn the course of nature upside down before one of His promises should fail those who trust Him.

Has God promised holiness to them that trust Him for it? If He has not, then to go to Him in faith for preservation from temptation and sin is tempting God. It is fanaticism. If God has left us to get along on our own watchfulness, firmness, and strength, then we must submit and do the best we can. But if He has made any promises, He will redeem them to the uttermost, although all earth and hell oppose Him.

This is true in regard to the mistakes and errors that Christians fall into. If there is no promise that they will be guided and led into truth and peace, then for a Christian to look to God for knowledge, wisdom, guidance, and direction is tempting God. But if there are promises on this subject, depend on it--they will be fulfilled in the believer who trusts in them and

exercises confidence in the Word of God.

I believe that the great difficulty of the Church on the subject of Christian perfection lies here--she has not fully understood how the Lord Jesus Christ is wholly pledged in all these relationships. The Church has as much reason and is as bound to trust in Him for holiness as for justification.

What do the Scriptures say? "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Corinthians 1:30).

Plainly, Jesus is promised and pledged for wisdom and for sanctification to all that receive Him. Has He promised that if any man lack wisdom, he may ask God, and if he asks in faith, God will give it to him? What then? Is there then no such thing as being preserved by Christ from falling into this and that delusion and error? God has made this broad promise, and Jesus is as much pledged for our wisdom and our sanctification, if we only trust in Him, as He is for our justification.

SURRENDERING TO THE KING

The Church must renounce any expectation from herself and die as absolutely to her own wisdom and strength as she does to her own righteousness. Jesus Christ is pledged for one as much as for the other. The only reason why the Church does not realize the same results is that Christ is trusted for justification, but for wisdom and sanctification He is not trusted!

The truth is that most believers, having begun in the Spirit, are now trying to be made perfect by the flesh. We have thrown ourselves on Christ for justification but have been attempting to make ourselves holy. If it is true, as Paul affirms, that Christ is to the Church both wisdom and sanctification, what excuse do Christians have for not being sanctified?

If individuals do not expect to live without sin against Christ, it must be for one of three reasons:

We love our fellow men better than we do Christ and are less willing to do them any injury.

We are restrained by a regard to our own reputation--and this proves that we love reputation more than Christ.

We think we can preserve ourselves from these crimes.

Suppose I were to ask any of you if you expect to commit murder or adultery? Horrible! you say. But why not? Are you so virtuous that you can resist any temptation that the devil can offer? If you say yes, you do not know yourself. If you have real power to abstain from openly disgraceful sins, in your own strength, you have power to abstain from all sins. But if your only reliance is on Jesus Christ to keep you from committing murder and adultery, why do you think that He is not equally able to keep you from all sins?

What a horrible reproach the Church is to Jesus Christ! She is in such a state that it is no wonder those who are brought in, with few exceptions, are a disgrace to Christianity. How can it be otherwise? How can the Church, living in such a manner, bring forth offspring that will honor Christ? The Church does not, and individual believers generally do not, receive Christ in all His offices as He is offered in the Bible. If they did, it would be impossible for them to live like such loathsome harlots.

If believers would only throw themselves wholly on Christ and make Him responsible by placing themselves entirely at His control, then they would know His power to save and would live without sin.

Jesus loves His Church. He loves you and will do anything for you. Place yourself in His hands and let Him make you transparent, loving, and holy. He will not fail you.

THE BRIDE OF CHRIST

1. Marriage is set forth in the bible as describing the _____ between _____ and the _____.

2. Jesus is often spoken of as the _____ of the _____.

3. As the woman usually does, the Church assumes the _____ of _____.

4. The _____ and the _____ of the husband and wife are one.

5. As the Husband of the _____, Christ is as _____

to do everything _____ to _____ the interests of the Church
as a _____ is _____ to promote the _____ of his wife.

6. Christ is as _____ of the reputation of His Church as any husband ever was of his wife's.

7. A wife will feel great _____ and _____ if she caused the death of her husband.

The Christian feels this remorse when he _____ as the occasion of the death of Jesus.

8. The Bible makes it a Christian _____ for the _____ to conform in _____

to the will of her _____.

9. The _____ becomes to the faithful wife the mainspring of her activity. Her

_____ is only the _____ out the _____ of her husband.

10. The relationship of the Church to Jesus is _____ the _____.

11. When believers exercise _____, the _____ becomes the _____ of all their conduct.

12. Every believer places himself as _____ under the _____ of Christ as a

married woman is under the _____ of her husband.

13. The woman naturally looks to her _____ to _____ her from_____, _____

and _____. He is bound to _____.

14. Jesus is pledged to _____ His Church from _____ foe.

15. The devil can no more _____ a single believer than he can _____ God Almighty.

16. No _____ in the universe can destroy a single _____.

17. Jesus has assumed _____ for all the Church's conduct.

18. Christ holds himself _____ for all the _____ of the Church.

19. Every believer is so _____ to Him that whatever any of them may be guilty of Jesus takes upon himself.

20. There is a sense in which the _____ is _____ in _____ and has no _____ known in law.

21. Are the crimes committed by believers against the moral law to be considered sin? _____ .

22. But because of being united to Christ, can the law get hold of them for condemnation? _____ .

23. Christ has assumed the responsibility of _____ out from under the _____

of _____, as well as from _____ the _____ .

24. A principal design of marriage is the _____ of the species. The same is _____

in regard to the _____.

25. Another object of marriage is the _____ and _____ of those who are naturally _____ and _____.

26. Jesus _____His Church and affords her _____ the _____ she needs.

27. The _____ of the parties is another reason for marriage.

The _____ of Christ is _____ by the love of the _____.

28. It would be strange to hear of a husband _____ to the _____ of his

_____ without _____ it himself.

29. _____ each other's _____ is a great _____.

30. THE PRINCIPAL reason for this _____ between Jesus and His Church is that He may _____ her.

31. What is to be thought of members of the Church who are not satisfied with the _____ of Christ

but must have the _____ and _____ of the _____ to make them _____?

32. Still more _____ would be a wife who _____ her lovers from the

_____ of her husband and made them her chosen _____.

33. What are we to thing of a woman who, at the very time of her marriage, _____

to _____ in_____ as long as she lives, in _____
of all the _____ and _____ of her husband?

34. Then what are we to think of "_____" who _____ expect to commit

_____ and _____ in it as long as they _____?

34. The Church _____ her sin upon Christ, because they act as if he _____ made

_____ _____ for _____ His people against temptation.

35. "_____" are _____ at the name of Christian _____.

36. So for _____ of years the greater part of the Church has

_____ taught that Jesus Christ

_____ provided a way for His people to _____.

37. Where can anything be found in the _____ and _____ of Jesus to _____

the treatment He receives?

38. If an individual _____ to live n sin, of course he _____ live in sin.

39. Because Paul insists believers should consider themselves _____ to _____, they should from

_____ NO MORE _____ to _____ than a dead man should _____ to walk.

40. What insures that believers will be kept from sin? _____ .

41. The reason many Christians do not receive _____ at all times

is that they _____ it or trust Jesus to _____ in perfect love.

42. NO ONE who _____ God for _____ He has _____ has ever _____ to receive.

43. If you trust God for what He has _____, that is tempting God.

44. If God has not promised holiness, then to go to Him in faith for _____ from_____

and _____ is tempting God.

45. A great difficulty on the subject of Christian perfection is: The Church does not fully _____ the

Lord Jesus Christ is _____ in all these relationships.

46. If individuals _____ expect to live without sin against Christ, it is because:

A. We _____ our _____ better than we do _____, and are _____

to do THEM an injury.

B. We are _____ by a regard to our _____--

and this proves we love reputation _____ than Christ.

C. We think we can _____ from these crimes.

47. Believers would know His _____ and would live without _____

if they would only _____ on Christ and make HIM _____

by placing themselves _____ at His control.

An Easy to Read
Short Life of Charles G. Finney
By Himself

[Edited by William Allen]

INTRODUCTION

This short autobiography of Charles Grandison Finney is intended to illustrate all that is taught in these booklets on revival; especially the fact that revivals of religion can be promoted by fulfilling the necessary laws: they are not events which have no relation to cause and effect.

After reading this booklet, every keen Christian will ask, "Can I be a revivalist like Finney?" The answer is, yes! If you will fulfill the following conditions as he fulfilled them.

At his conversion Finney felt the call to Christian service. He vowed, "If I am ever converted, I will preach the Gospel." This willingness to obey the call opened the way for God to pour His Spirit upon him in the wonderful manner recorded.

In the strength of that baptism of the Holy Spirit Finney found that his words were endued with a penetrating power that wounded sinners like a sword. God had imparted to him one of the gifts mentioned in Eph. 4:8, 11, 12.

"When He ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. And He gave

some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." The word, "prophet" means, "a revealer of God's will to men," one who speaks with special inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But in order to retain this power Finney found that it was necessary to live continually in the spirit of prayer. Without this vital communion with God he was as powerless as any other man. Through long experience he learned that the strength and fervour of a revival is only equal to the strength of desire for it that is sent up in agonizing prayer to God.

Other conditions of Finney's success as a revivalist were his understanding of the Gospel, and his method of dealing with anxious sinners. He continually sought the teaching of the Holy Spirit on these subjects; they were his constant study.

With those that are to follow, this series of booklets on revival will cover adequately the whole field of revival work. Every Christian who will faithfully follow the instructions given will naturally be a power for revival in whatever sphere he is placed.

W.E. ALLEN September, 1948.

CHAPTER 1
EARLY LIFE AND CONVERSION TO CHRIST

It has pleased God in some measure to connect my name and labours with an extensive movement of the church of Christ, regarded by some as a new era in its progress, especially in relation to revivals of religion. I have been particularly importuned, for a number of years, by the friends of those revivals with which my name and labours have been connected, to write a history of them.

I was born in Warren, Litchfield county, Connecticut, August 29, 1792. When I was about two years old, my father removed to Oneida county, New York, which was, at that time, to a great extent, a wilderness. No religious privilege were enjoyed by the people.

In the neighbourhood of my father's residence we had just erected a meeting house and settled a minister, when my father was induced to remove again into the wilderness skirting the southern shore of Lake Ontario, a little south of Sackett's Harbor. Here again I lived for several years, enjoying no better religious privileges than I had in Oneida

county.

Thus when I went to Adams to study law, I was almost as ignorant of religion as a heathen. I had been brought up mostly in the woods. I had very little regard to the Sabbath, and had no definite knowledge of religious truth.

At Adams, for the first time, I sat statedly, for a length of time, under an educated ministry. Rev. George W. Gale, from Princeton, New Jersey, became, soon after I went there, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that place.

In studying elementary law, I found the old authors frequently quoting the Scriptures, and referring especially to Mosaic Institutes, as authority for many of the great principles of common law. This excited my curiosity so much that I went and purchased a Bible, the first I had ever owned; and whenever I found a reference by the law authors to the Bible, I turned to the passage and consulted it in its connection. This soon led to my taking a new interest in the Bible, and I read and meditated on it much more than I had ever done before in my life. However, much of it I did not understand.

But as I read my Bible and attended the prayer meetings, heard Mr. Gale preach, and conversed

with him, with the elders of the church, and with others from time to time, I became very restless. A little consideration convinced me that I was by no means in a state of mind to go to heaven if I should die.

On a Sabbath evening in the autumn of 1821, I made up my mind that I would settle the question of my soul's salvation at once. During Monday and Tuesday my convictions increased; but still it seemed as if my heart grew harder.

Tuesday night I had become very nervous; and in the night a strange feeling came over me as if I was about to die. I knew that if I did I should sink down to hell; but I quieted myself as best I could until morning.

At an early hour I started for the office. But just before I arrived at the office, something seemed to confront me with questions like these: indeed, it seemed as if the inquiry was within myself, as if an inward voice said to me, "What are you waiting for? And what are you trying to do? Are you endeavoring to work out a righteousness of your own?"

Just at this point the whole question of Gospel salvation opened to my mind in a manner most marvelous to me at the time. I think I then saw, as

clearly as I ever have in my life, the reality and fullness of the atonement of Christ. After this distinct revelation had stood for some little time before my mind, the question seemed to be put, "Will you accept it now, to-day?" I replied, "Yes: I will accept it to-day, or I will die in the attempt." Instead of going to the office, I turned and bent my course towards the woods, feeling that I must be alone and away from all human eyes and ears, so that I could pour out my prayer to God.

But when I attempted to pray I found that my heart would not pray. I would hear a rustling in the leaves, as I thought, and would stop and look up to see if somebody were not coming. Right there the revelation of my pride of heart, as the great difficulty that stood in the way, was distinctly shown to me. An overwhelming sense of my wickedness in being ashamed to have a human being see me on my knees before God, took such powerful possession of me, that I cried at the top of my voice, and exclaimed that I would not leave that place if all the men on earth and all the devils in hell surrounded me.

Just at that point this passage of Scripture seemed to drop into my mind with a flood of light; "Then shall ye go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto

you. Then shall ye seek Me and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." I instantly seized hold of this with my heart. I was as conscious as I was of my existence, of trusting at that moment in God's veracity.

He then gave me many other promises, both from the Old and the New Testament, especially some most precious promises respecting our Lord Jesus Christ. I prayed till my mind became so full that, before I was aware of it, I was on my feet and tripping up the ascent toward the road. The question of my being converted, had not so much as arisen to my thought; but as I went up, brushing through the leaves and bushes, I recollect saying with great emphasis, "If I am ever converted, I will preach the Gospel."

I walked quietly towards the village; and so perfectly quiet was my mind that it seemed as if all nature listened. After dinner we were engaged in removing our books and furniture to another office. My mind, however, remained in that profoundly tranquil state.

By evening we got the books and furniture adjusted; and I made up, in the open fire-place, a good fire, hoping to spend the evening alone. Just at dark Squire W-----, seeing that everything was adjusted, bade me good-night and went to his home. I had

accompanied him to the door; and as I closed the door and turned around, my heart seemed to be liquid within me. All my feelings seemed to rise and flow out; and the utterance of my heart was, "I want to pour my whole soul out to God." The rising of my soul was so great that I rushed into the room back of the front office to pray.

There was no fire, and no light, in the room; nevertheless it appeared to me as if it were perfectly light. As I went in and shut the door after me, it seemed as if I met the Lord Jesus Christ face to face. It seemed to me that I saw Him as I would see any other man. He said nothing, but looked at me in such a manner as to break me right down at His feet.

As soon as my mind became calm enough to break off from the interview, I returned to the front office, and found that the fire that I had made of large wood was nearly burnt out. But as I turned and was about to take a seat by the fire, I received a mighty baptism of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Spirit descended upon me in a manner that seemed to go through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could

not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.

No words can express the wonderful love that was shed abroad in my heart. I wept aloud with joy and love; and I do not know but I should say, I literally bellowed out the unutterable gushing of my heart.

When I awoke in the morning the sun had risen, and was pouring a clear light into my room. Words cannot express the impression that this sunlight made upon me. Instantly the baptism that I had received the night before, returned to me in the same manner.

Chapter II
FIRST REVIVAL AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

This morning I went down into the office, and there I was having the renewal of these mighty waves of love and salvation blowing over me, when Squire W---- came into the office. I said a few words to him on the subject of his salvation. I thought no more of it then, but afterward found that the remark I made pierced him like a sword; and he did not recover from it till he was converted.

I soon sallied forth from the office to converse with

those whom I should meet about their souls. I had the impression, which has never left my mind, that God wanted me to preach the Gospel, and that I must begin immediately.

I spoke with many persons that day, and I believe the Spirit of God made lasting impressions upon every one of them. I cannot remember one whom I spoke with, who was not soon after converted.

In the course of the day, a good deal of excitement was created in the village by its being reported what the Lord had done for my soul. Some thought one thing, and some another. At evening, without any appointment having been made that I could learn, I observed that the people were going to the place where they usually held their conference and prayer meetings.

I went there myself. The minister was there, and nearly all the principal people in the village. No one seemed ready to open the meeting; but the house was packed to its utmost capacity. I did not wait for anybody, but arose and began by saying that I then knew that religion was from God. I went on and told such parts of my experience as it seemed important for me to tell. We had a wonderful meeting that evening; and, from that day, we had a meeting every evening for a long time.

The work spread among all classes; and extended itself, not only through the village, but out of the village in every direction. My heart was so full that, for more than a week, I did not feel at all inclined to sleep or eat. I went on in this way for a good many days, until I found that I must rest and sleep, or I should become insane. From that point I was more cautious in my labours; and I ate regularly, and slept as much as I could.

The word of God had wonderful power; and I was every day surprised to find that a few words, spoken to an individual, would stick in his heart like an arrow.

I used to have, when I was a young Christian, many seasons of communing with God which cannot be described in words. And not infrequently those seasons would end in an impression on my mind like this: "Go, see that thou tell no man."

I used to spend a great deal of time in prayer; sometimes, I thought, literally praying "without ceasing." I also found it very profitable, and felt very much inclined to hold frequent days of private fastings. I found I could not live without enjoying the presence of God; and if at any time a cloud came over me, I could not rest, I could not study, I could not attend to anything with the least satisfaction or

benefit, until the medium was again cleared between my soul and God.

The Lord taught me, in those early days of my Christian experience, many very important truths in regard to the spirit of prayer. At first I did not understand what this experience of mind that I had passed through, was. But shortly after in relating it to a Christian brother he said to me, "Why, that was the travail of your soul." A few minutes' conversation, and pointing me to certain Scriptures, gave me to understand what it was.

In the Spring of this year, 1822, I put myself under the care of the Presbytery as a candidate for the Gospel ministry. Some of the ministers urged me to go to Princeton to study theology, but I declined. They appointed my pastor to superintend my studies. He offered me the use of his library, and said he would give what attention I needed to my theological studies.

The presbytery was finally called together at Adams to examine me; and, if they could agree to do so, to license me to preach the Gospel. When they had examined me, they voted unanimously to license me to preach. At this meeting of the presbytery I first saw Rev. Daniel Nash, who is generally known as "Father Nash."

Chapter III.
REVIVALS IN EVANS' MILLS, ANTWERP, AND GOUVERNEUR.

Having had no regular training for the ministry I did not expect or desire to labor in large towns or cities, or minister to cultivated congregations. I intended to go into the new settlements and preach in school-houses, and barns, and groves, as best I could.

I began to preach in the stone school-house at Evans' Mills. The people were very much interested, and thronged the place to hear me preach. They extolled my preaching; but still no general conviction appeared upon the public mind.

I was very much dissatisfied with this state of things; and at one of my evening services I said to them, "You admit that what I preach is the Gospel. You profess to believe it. Now will you receive it? Do you mean to receive it, or do you intend to reject it?"

After making this plain, so that I knew that they understood it, I then said: "You who are willing to pledge to me and to Christ, that you will immediately make your peace with God, please rise up." They looked at one another and at me, and all sat still,

just as I had expected.

After looking around upon them for a few moments, I said, "Then you are committed. You have taken your stand. You have rejected Christ and His Gospel; and ye are witnesses one against the other, and God is witness against you all."

When I thus pressed them they began to look angry, and arose and started for the door. When they began to move, I paused. As soon as I stopped speaking they turned to see why I did not go on. I said, "I am sorry for you; and will preach to you once more, the Lord willing, to-morrow night."

They all left the house except Deacon McC----, who was a deacon of the Baptist church in that place. I saw that the Congregationalists were confounded. This was no more than I expected.

In the afternoon Deacon McC---- and I went into the grove together, and spent the whole afternoon in prayer. Just at evening the Lord gave us great enlargement, and promise of victory. Both of us felt assured that we had prevailed with God; and that, that night, the power of God would be revealed among the people.

As the time came for meeting, we left the woods and went to the village. The people were already

thronging to the place of worship, and packed the house to its utmost capacity.

I had not taken a thought with regard to what I should preach; indeed, this was common with me at that time. The Holy Spirit was upon me, and I felt confident that when the time came for action I should know what to preach. As soon as I found the house packed, so that no more could get in, I arose, and I think, without any formal introduction of singing, opened upon them with these words: "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him."

The Spirit of God came upon me with such power, that it was like opening a battery upon them. For more than an hour and a half, the word of God came through me to them in a manner that I could see was carrying all before it. It was a fire and a hammer breaking the rock; and as the sword that was piercing to the dividing of soul and spirit. I saw that a general conviction was spreading over the whole congregation. Then I appointed another meeting, and dismissed the congregation.

That evening, instead of going to my usual lodging, I accepted an invitation, and went home with a family

where I had not before stopped over night. Early in the morning I found that I had been sent for to the place where I was supposed to be, several times during the night, to visit families where there were persons under awful distress of mind. This led me to sally forth among the people, and everywhere I found a state of wonderful conviction of sin and alarm for their souls.

A little way from the village Evans' Mills, was a settlement of Germans, where there was a German church with several elders, and a considerable membership, but no minister, and no regular religious meetings. Mingling, as they did more or less, in the scenes that passed in the village, they requested me to go out there and preach. I consented; and the first time I preached I took this text: "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

The settlement turned out, and the school-house where they worshipped was filled to its utmost capacity. In a very few days it was found that the whole settlement was under conviction; elders of the church and all were in the greatest consternation, feeling that they had no holiness. At their request I appointed a meeting for inquiry, to give instruction to inquirers.

The revival among the Germans resulted in the

conversion of the whole church, I believe, and of nearly the whole community of Germans. It was one of the most interesting revivals that I ever witnessed.

While I was laboring in this place, the Presbytery were called together to ordain me, which they did. Both churches were so strengthened, and their numbers so greatly increased, that they soon went forward and built each of them a commodious meeting-house, and I believe have had a healthy state of religion there since that time. I have not been there for many years.

The doctrines preached were those which I have always preached as the Gospel of Christ. I insisted upon the voluntary total moral depravity of the unregenerate; and the unalterable necessity of a radical change of heart by the Holy Ghost, and by means of the truth.

I laid great stress upon prayer as a indispensable condition of promoting the revival. The atonement of Jesus Christ, His divinity, His divine mission, His perfect life, His vicarious death, His resurrection, repentance, faith, justification by faith, and all the kindred doctrines, were discussed and manifestly made efficacious by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The means used were simply preaching, prayer and conference meetings, much private prayer, much personal conversation, and meetings for the instruction of earnest inquirers.

I have spoken of the doctrines preached. I should add, that I was obliged to take much pains in giving instruction to inquirers. I tried to make them understand that God was using the means with them, and not they with Him; that God was willing, and they were unwilling; that God was ready and they were not ready. In short, I tried to shut them up to present faith and repentance, as the thing which God required of them: present and instant submission to His will; present and instant acceptance of Christ.

During the whole six months that I labored in that region, I rode on horseback from town to town, and from settlement to settlement, in various directions, and preached the Gospel as I had opportunity. When I left Adams my health had run down a good deal. I had coughed blood; and at the time I was licensed, my friends thought that I could live but a short time. Mr. Gale charged me, when I left Adams, not to attempt to preach more than once a week, and then to be sure not to speak more than half and hour at a time.

But instead of this, I visited from house to house, attended prayer meetings, and preached and labored every day, and almost every night, through the whole season. Before the six months were completed my health was entirely restored, my lungs were sound, and I could preach two hours, and two hours and a half, and longer, without feeling the least fatigue. I think my sermons generally averaged nearly or quite two hours. I preached out of doors; I preached in barns; I preached in school-houses; and a glorious revival spread all over that new region of country.

All through the earlier part of my ministry especially, I used to meet from ministers a great many rebuffs and reproofs, particularly in respect to my manner of preaching. The fact is, their education had been so entirely different from mine, that they disapproved of my manner of preaching, every much. They would reprove me for illustrating my ideas by reference to the common affairs of men of different pursuits around me, as I was in the habit of doing. Among farmers and mechanics, and other classes of men, I borrowed my illustrations from their various occupations. I tried also to use such language as they would understand. I addressed them in the language of the common people. I sought to

express all my ideas in few words, and in words that were in common use.

Before I was converted I had a different tendency. In writing and speaking I had sometimes allowed myself to use ornate language. But when I came to preach the Gospel, my mind was so anxious to be thoroughly understood, that I studied in the most earnest manner, on the one hand to avoid what was vulgar, and on the other to express my thoughts with the greatest simplicity of language.

The more experience I had, the more I saw the results of my method of preaching, the more I conversed with all classes, high and low, educated and uneducated, the more was I confirmed in the fact that God had led me, had taught me, had given me right conceptions in regard to the best manner of winning souls. I say that God taught me; and I know it must have been so; for surely I never had obtained these notions from man. And I have often thought that I could say with perfect truth as Paul said, that I was not taught the Gospel by man, but by the Spirit of Christ Himself. And I was taught it by the Spirit of the Lord in a manner so clear and forcible, that no argument of my ministerial brethren, with which I was plied so often and so long; had the least weight with me.

I mention this as a matter of duty. For I am still solemnly impressed with the conviction, that the schools are to a great extent spoiling the ministers. Ministers in these days have great facilities for obtaining information on all theological questions; and are vastly more learned, so far as theological, historical, and Biblical learning is concerned, than they perhaps ever have been in any age of the world. Yet with all their learning, they do not know how to use it. They are after all, to a great extent, like David in Saul's armour.

My habit has always been to study the Gospel, and the best application of it, all the time. I do not confine myself to hours and days of writing my sermons; but my mind is always pondering the truths of the Gospel, and the best ways of using them. I go among the people and learn their wants. Then, in the light of the Holy Spirit, I take a subject that I think will meet their present necessities. I think intensely on it, and pray much over the subject on Sabbath morning, for example, and get my mind full of it, and then go and pour it out to the people.

I almost always get my subjects on my knees in prayer; and it has been a common experience with me, upon receiving a subject from the Holy Spirit, to have it make so strong an impression on my mind

as to make me tremble, so that I could with difficulty write. When subjects are thus given me that seem to go through me, body and soul, I can in a few moments make out a skeleton that shall enable me to retain the view presented by the Spirit; and I find that such sermons always fell with great power upon the people.

And let mo man say that is claiming a higher inspiration than is promised to ministers, or than ministers have a right to expect. For I believe that all ministers, called by Christ to preach the Gospel, ought to be, and may be, in such a sense inspired, as to "preach the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." All ministers may be, and ought to be, so filled with the Holy Spirit that all who hear them shall be impressed with the conviction that "God is in them of a truth."

I must now give some account of my labors, and their result, at Antwerp, a village north of Evans' Mills. I arrived there, the first time, in April, and found that no religious services, of any kind, were held in the town.

In passing around the village I heard a vast amount of profanity. The very atmosphere seemed to me to be poison; and a kind of terror took possession of me.

I gave myself to prayer on Saturday, and finally urged my petition till the answer came: "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not they peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee. For I have much people in this city." This completely relieved me of all fear.

Sabbath morning I arose and left my lodgings in the hotel; and in order to get alone, where I could let out my voice as well as my heart, I went up into the woods at some distance from the village, and continued for a considerable time in prayer. However, I did not get relief, and went up a second time; but the load upon my mind increased, and I did not find relief. I went up a third time; and then the answer came.

I found that it was time for meeting, and went immediately to the school-house. I found it packed to its utmost capacity. I had my pocket Bible in my hand, and read to them this text: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish but have everlasting life." The subject affected my own mind very much; and I preached and poured out my soul and my tears together.

The labors of this day were effectual to the conviction of the great mass of the population. From

that day, appoint a meeting when and where I would, anywhere round about, and the people would throng to hear. The word immediately commenced and went forward with great power.

The revival soon spread in the direction of Brownville, a considerable village several miles, I think, in a south-western direction from that place. Finally, under the pressing invitation of the minister and church at Brownville, I went there and spent the winter.

While I was at Brownville, God revealed to me, all at once, in a most unexpected manner, the fact that He was going to pour out His Spirit at Gouverneur, and that I must go there and preach. I had not thought of the place, that I know of, for months; but in prayer the thing was all shown to me, as clear as light, that I must go and preach in Gouverneur, and that God would pour out His Spirit there.

God seemed to say to me, "Go to Gouverneur; the time has come." Brother Nash had come a few days before this, and was spending some time with me. I said therefore to Brother Nash, "You must go to Gouverneur and see what is there, and come back and make your report."

He started the next morning, and after he had been

gone two or three days, returned saying, that he had found a good many professors of religion, under considerable exercise of mind, and that he was confident that there was a good deal of the Spirit of the Lord among the people. I requested Brother Nash to return immediately, informing the people that they might expect me on a certain day that week.

Brother Nash accordingly returned the next day, and made the appointment as I desired. When the hour arrived, the house was filled. The people had heard enough, for and against me, to have their curiosity excited, and there was a general turning out. The Lord gave me a text, and I went into the pulpit and let my heart out to the people. The word took powerful effect. That was very manifest to everybody I think.

As soon as the revival broke out, and attracted general attention, the Baptist brethren began to oppose it. This encouraged a set of young men to join hand in hand, to strengthen each other in opposition to the work. Those young men seemed to stand like a bulwark in the way of the progress of the work.

Brother Nash addressed them very earnestly, and pointed out the guilt and danger of the course they

were taking. Toward the close of his address, he waxed exceeding warm, and said to them, "Now, mark me, young men! God will break your ranks in less than one week, either by converting some of you, or by sending some of you to hell. He will do this as certainly as the Lord is my God!"

On Tuesday morning of the same week, the leader of these young men came to me, in the greatest distress of mind. He was all prepared to submit; and as soon as I came to press him he broke down like a child, confessed, and manifestly gave himself to Christ. Then he said, "What shall I do, Mr. Finney?" I replied, "Go immediately to all your young companions, and pray with them, and exhort them, at once to turn to the Lord." He did so; and before the week was out, nearly if not all of that class of young men, were hoping in Christ.

I do not know the number of those converted in that revival. It was a large farming town, settled by well-to-do inhabitants. The great majority of them, I am confident, were, in that revival, converted to Christ.

Chapter IV.
REVIVALS IN DE KALB, WESTERN, ROME, UTICA, AND AUBURN

From Gouverneur I went to De Kalb, another village still further north, some sixteen miles, I think. A revival commenced immediately, and went forward with a good deal of power, for a place where the inhabitants were so much scattered.

The revival took a very strong hold of the church in this place; and among others, one of the elders of the church, by the name of B----, was thoroughly broken down, and became quite another man. The impression deepened on the public mind from day to day.

In reflecting upon what I have said of the revivals of religion, in Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties, I am not quite sure that I have laid as much stress as I intended upon the manifest agency of the Holy Spirit, in those revivals. I wish to be distinctly understood, in all that I shall say, in my narrative of the revivals that I have witnessed, that I always in my own mind, and practically, laid the utmost stress upon this fact, underlying, directing, and giving efficiency to the means, without which nothing would be accomplished.

I have said, more than once, that the spirit of prayer that prevailed in those revivals was a very marked

feature of them. It was common for young converts to be greatly exercised in prayer; and in some instances, so much so, that they were constrained to pray whole nights, and until their bodily strength was quite exhausted, for the conversion of souls around them. There was a great pressure of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of the Christians; and they seemed to bear about with them the burden of immortal souls. They manifested the greatest solemnity of mind, and the greatest watchfulness in all their words and actions. It was very common to find Christians, whenever they met in any place, instead of engaging in conversation, to fall on their knees in prayer.

In regard to my own experience, I will say that unless I had the spirit of prayer I could do nothing. If even for a day or an hour I lost the spirit of grace and supplication, I found myself unable to preach with power and efficiency, or to win souls by personal conversation. In this respect my experience was what it had always been.

For several weeks before I left De Kalb, I was very strongly exercised in prayer, and had an experience that was somewhat new to me. I found myself so much exercised, and so borne down with the weight of immortal souls, that I was constrained to pray

without ceasing.

Some of my experience, indeed, alarmed me. A spirit of importunity sometimes came upon me so that I would say to God that He had made a promise to answer prayer and I could not, and would not, be denied. I felt so certain that He would hear me, and that faithfulness to His promises, and to Himself, rendered it impossible that He should not hear and answer, that frequently I found myself saying to Him, "I hope Thou doest not think that I can be denied. I come with Thy faithful promises in my hand, and I cannot be denied."

I cannot tell how absurd unbelief looked to me, and how certain it was, in my mind, that God would answer prayer &endash; those prayers that, from day to day, and from hour to hour, I found myself offering in such agony and faith. I had no idea of the shape the answer would take, the locality in which the prayers would be answered, or the exact time of the answer. My impression was that the answer was near, even at the door; and I felt myself strengthened in the divine life, put on the harness for a mighty conflict with the powers of darkness, and expected soon to see a far more powerful outpouring of the Spirit of God, in that new country where I had been laboring.

Mr. Gale had settled upon a farm in Western; and was employing some young men, in helping to cultivate the farm, and was engaged in teaching them, and endeavouring to regain his health. I went to his house, and for several weeks was his guest. We arrived there Thursday, I think, and that afternoon there was a stated prayer-meetings, in the school-house, near the church.

In the afternoon, Mr. Gale invited me to go to the prayer-meeting, and I went. The meeting was opened by one of the elders, who read a chapter in the Bible, then a hymn, which they sung. After this he made a long prayer, or perhaps I should say an exhortation, or gave a narrative -- I hardly know what to call it. He told the Lord how many years they had been holding that prayer-meeting weekly, and that no answer had been given to their prayers. He made such statements and confessions as greatly shocked me. After he had done, another elder took up the same theme.

They had got through, and were about to dismiss the meeting. But one of the elders asked me if I would not make a remark, before they dismissed. I arose and took their statements and confessions for a text; and it seemed to me, at the time, that God inspired me to give them a terrible searching.

I followed them up on the track of their prayers and confessions, until the elder, who was the principal man among them, and opened the meeting, bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Brother Finney, it is all true!" He fell upon his knees and wept aloud. This was the signal for a general breaking down. Every man and woman went down upon their knees.

As soon as they recovered themselves somewhat, they besought me to remain and preach to them on the Sabbath. I regarded it as the voice of the Lord, and consented to do so. It was manifest to everybody that the work of grace had begun. I made appointments to preach in different parts of the town, in school-houses, and at the centre, during the week; and the work increased from day to day.

In the meantime my own mind was much exercised in prayer; and I found that the spirit of prayer was prevailing, especially among the female members of the church. Mrs. B----- and Mrs. H-----, the wives of two of the elders of the church, I found, were, almost immediately, greatly exercised in prayer.

The work went on, spread, and prevailed, until it began to exhibit unmistakable indications of the direction in which the Spirit of God was leading from that place. The distance to Rome was nine miles, I

believe. About half way, was a small village, called Elmer's Hill. There was a large school-house, where I held a weekly lecture; and it soon became manifest that the work was spreading in the direction of Rome and Utica.

At this time Rev. Moses Gillet, pastor of the Congregational Church in Rome, hearing what the Lord was doing in Western, came to see the work that was going on.

Soon after this, and when the revival was in its full strength at Western, Mr. Gillet persuaded me to exchange a day with him. I went to Rome and preached three times on the Sabbath. To me it was perfectly manifest that the word took great effect.

I waited on Monday morning, till Mr. Gillet returned from Western. I told him what my impressions were in respect to the state of the people. He did not seem to realize that the work was beginning with such power as I supposed. But he wanted to call for inquirers, if there were any in the congregation, and wished me to be present at that meeting. The meeting was called at the house of one of his deacons. When we arrived, we found the large sitting-room crowded to its utmost capacity. I pointed them to Christ, as the Saviour of the world; and kept on in this strain as long as they could well endure it,

which, indeed, was but a few moments.

The next morning, as soon as it was fairly day, people began to call at Mr. Gillet's, to have us go and visit members of their families, whom they represented as being under the greatest conviction. We found a most extraordinary state of things. Convictions were so deep and universal, that we would sometimes go into a house, and find some in a kneeling posture, and some prostate on the floor.

Ministers came in from neighbouring towns, and expressed great astonishment at what they saw and heard, as well they might. Conversions multiplied so rapidly, that we had no way of learning who were converted. Therefore every evening, at the close of my sermon, I requested all who had been converted that day, to come forward and report themselves in front of the pulpit, that we might have a little conversation with them. We were every night surprised by the number and the class of persons that came forward.

As the work proceeded, it gathered in nearly the whole population. Nearly every one of the lawyers, merchants and physicians, and almost all the principal men, and indeed, nearly all the adult population of the village, were brought in, especially those who belonged to Mr. Gillet's congregation. Mr.

Gillet afterward reported that, during the twenty days that I spent at Rome, there were five hundred conversions in that town.

The state of things in the village, and in the neighbourhood round about, was such that no one could come into the village, without feeling awe-stricken with the impression that God was there, in a peculiar and wonderful manner.

The town was full of prayer. Go where you would, you heard the voice of prayer. Pass along the street, and if two or three Christians happened to be together, they were praying. Wherever they met they prayed. Wherever they was a sinner unconverted, especially if he manifested any opposition, you would find some two or three brethren or sisters agreeing to make him a particular subject of prayer.

When I had been at Rome about twenty days, one of the elders of Mr. Aiken's church in Utica, a very prominent and a very useful man, died; and I went down to attend his funeral. Mr. Aiken conducted the funeral exercises; and I learned from him that the spirit of prayer was already manifest in his congregation, and in that city. He told me that one of his principal women had literal travail of soul, to such an extent that when her strength was

exhausted, she could not endure the burden of her mind, unless somebody was engaged in prayer with her, upon whose prayer she could lean &endash; some one who could express her desires to God.

I understood this, and told Mr. Aiken that the work had already begun in her heart. He recognized it, of course; and wished me to commence labor with him and his people immediately. I soon did so, and, be sure, the work began at once. The word took immediate effect, and the place became filled with the manifested influence of the Holy Spirit. Our meetings were crowded every night, and the work spread and went on powerfully.

It was in the midst of the revival at Utica, that we first heard of the opposition to those revivals, that was springing up in the East. The work, however, went on with great power, converting all classes, until Mr. Aiken reported the hopeful conversion of five hundred, in the course of a few weeks, most of them, I believe, belonging to his own congregation.

While making my home in Utica, I preached frequently in New Hartford, a village four miles south of Utica. There was a precious and powerful work of grace, a Mr. Coe being at the time pastor of the Presbyterian Church. I preached also at Whitesboro, another beautiful village, four miles

west of Utica; where also was a powerful revival. The pastor, Mr. John Frost, was a most efficient laborer in the work.

This revival occurred in the winter and spring of 1826. When the converts had been received into the churches throughout the county, Rev. John Frost, pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Whitesboro, published a pamphlet giving some account of the revival, and stated, if I remember right, that within the bounds of that presbytery, the converts numbered three thousand.

Dr. Lansing, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church at Auburn, came to Utica, to witness the revival there, and urged me to go out and labor for a time with him. In the summer of 1826, I complied with his request, and went there and labored with him for a season.

The Lord soon revived His work in Auburn. Mr. Lansing had a large congregation, and a very intelligent one. The revival soon took effect among the people, and became powerful.

While at Auburn, I preached more or less in the neighboring churches round about; and the revival spread in various directions, to Cayuga, and to Skeneateles. This was in the summer and autumn

of 1826.

Chapter V.
REVIVALS IN TROY, NEW LEBANON, STEPHENTOWN,

PHILADELPHIA AND READING.

Early in the autumn of this year, 1826, I accepted an invitation from the Rev. Dr. Beman and his session to labor with them in Troy, for the revival of religion. At Troy, I spent the fall and winter, and the revival was powerful in that city.

Before I left Troy, a young lady, a Miss S----, from New Lebanon, in Columbia county, who was an only daughter of one of the deacons or elders of the church in New Lebanon, came to Troy. As soon as her eyes were opened, and her peace was made with God, she went immediately home, and began her labors for a revival in that place. Religion in New Lebanon, at that time, was in a very low state. The young people were nearly all unconverted; and the old members of the church were in a very cold and inefficient state.

In the course of a week or two, there was so much interest excited that Miss S---- came out herself to

Troy, to beg me to go there to preach. She was requested to do so by the pastor and by members of the church. I went out and preached. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out, and the revival went forward with great power. Very interesting incidents occurred almost every day. Striking conversions were multiplied, and a great and blessed change came over the religious aspect of the whole place.

About this time, a proposition was made by somebody, I know not who, to hold a convention or consultation of the subject of conducting revivals. Correspondence was entered into between the Western brethren who had been engaged in those revivals, and the Eastern brethren who had been opposing them. It was finally agreed to hold the convention on a certain day, I think in July, 1827, in New Lebanon, where I had been laboring.

After this convention I heard no more of the opposition of Dr. Beecher and Mr. Nettleton. Opposition in that form had spent itself. The results of the revivals were such as to shut the mouths of gainsayers, and convince everybody that they were indeed pure and glorious revivals of religion, and as far from anything objectionable as any revivals that ever were witnessed in this world.

Soon after the adjournment of the convention, on

the Sabbath, as I came out of the pulpit, a young lady by the name of S----, from Stephentown, was introduced to me. She asked me if I could not go up to their town and preach. I replied that my hands were full, and that I did not see that I could.

On the next Sabbath, Miss S---- met me again, as I came out of the pulpit, and begged me to go up there and preach. I finally told her that if the elders of the church desired me to come, she might have a notice given out that I would come up, the Lord willing, and preach in their church, the next Sabbath at five o'clock in the afternoon. This would allow me to preach twice in New Lebanon, after which I could ride up to Stephentown and preach at five o'clock. This seemed to light up her countenance and lift the load from her heart. She went home and had the notice given.

At the third service the Spirit of God was poured out on the congregation. The state of things in Stephentown, now demanded that I should leave New Lebanon and take up my quarters there. I did so. The spirit of prayer in the mean time had come powerfully upon me, as had been the case for some time with Miss S----. The praying power so manifestly spreading and increasing, the work soon took on a very powerful type; so much so that the

word of the Lord would cut the strongest men down, and render them entirely helpless. I could name many cases of this kind.

As elsewhere, the striking characteristics of this revival, were a mighty spirit of prevailing prayer; overwhelming conviction of sin; sudden and powerful conversions to Christ; great love and abounding joy of the converts, and their great earnestness, activity and usefulness in their prayers and labors for others. This revival occurred in the town adjoining New Lebanon, and immediately after the convention.

While I was laboring at New Lebanon, the preceding summer, Rev. Mr. Gilbert of Wilmington, Delaware whose father resided in New Lebanon, came there on a visit. He heard me preach in New Lebanon, and saw the results; and he was very earnest that I should come and aid him in Wilmington. As soon as I could see my way clear to leave Stephentown, therefore, I went to Wilmington, and engaged in labors with Mr. Gilbert.

In the meantime I had been induced to go up and preach for Mr. Patterson, at Philadelphia, twice each week. The word took so much effect in Philadelphia as to convince me it was my duty to leave Mr. Gilbert to carry on the work in Wilmington, while I

gave my whole time to labor in Philadelphia.

The revival took such hold in Mr. Patterson's congregation as greatly to interest him; and as he saw that God was blessing the word as I presented it, he stood firmly by me, and never, in any case, objected to anything that I advanced.

The interest became so great that our congregations were packed at every meeting. The ministers nearly all received me to their pulpits.

The revival spread, and took a powerful hold. All our meetings for preaching, for prayer, and for inquiry, were crowded. There were a great many more inquirers than we could well attend to. It was late in the fall when I took my lodgings in Philadelphia, and I continued to labor there without any intermission until the following August, 1828. I do not recollect exact dates, but I think that in all, I labored in Philadelphia about a year and a half. In all this time there was no abatement of the revival, that I could see.

In the spring of 1829, when the Delaware was high, the lumbermen came down with their rafts from the region of the high land, where they had been getting the lumber out, during the winter. At that time there was a large tract of country, along the northern

region of Pennsylvania, called by many, "the lumber region," that extended up toward the headwaters of the Delaware river. Many persons were engaged in getting out lumber there, summer and winter. Much of this lumber was floated down in the spring of the year, when the water was high, to Philadelphia.

These men that came down with lumber, attended our meetings and quite a number of them were hopefully converted. They went back into the wilderness, and began to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and to tell the people around them what they had seen in Philadelphia, and to exhort them to attend to their salvation. Their efforts were immediately blessed, and the revival began to take hold, and to spread among those lumbermen. It went on in a most powerful and remarkable manner. It spread to such an extent that in many cases persons would be convicted and converted, who had not attended any meetings, and who were almost as ignorant as heathen. Men who were getting out lumber, and were living in little shanties alone, or where two or three or more were together, would be seized with such conviction that it would lead them to wander off and inquire what they should do; and they would be converted, and thus the revival spread. There was the greatest simplicity

manifested by the converts.

I have said that this work began in the spring of 1829. In the spring of 1831, I was at Auburn again. Two or three men from this lumber region, came there to see me, and to inquire how they could get some ministers to go in there. They said that not less than five thousand people had been converted in that lumber region; that the revival had extended itself along for eighty miles, and there was not a single minister of the Gospel there.

I found Mr. Patterson to be one of the truest and holiest men that I have ever labored with. He was a tall man, of striking figure and powerful voice. He would preach with the tears rolling down his cheeks, and with an earnestness and pathos that were striking. It was impossible to hear him preach without being impressed with a sense of his intense earnestness and his great honesty.

He always used to have a revival of religion every winter; and at the time when I labored with him, I think he told me he had had a revival for fourteen winters in succession. He had a praying people.

From Philadelphia, in the winter of 1829-1830, I went to Reading, a city about forty miles west of Philadelphia. In Reading there were several

German churches, and one Presbyterian Church. The pastor of the latter was the Rev. Dr. Greer. At his request, and that of the elders of the church, I went out to labor there for a time.

I soon found, however, the neither Dr. Greer, nor any of his people, had any just idea what they needed, or what a revival really was. However, on the third Sabbath, I think, I gave notice that a meeting for inquiry would be held in the lecture room, in the basement of the church, on Monday evening.

Monday was rather a snowy, cold day. I think I observed that conviction was taking hold of the congregation; yet I felt doubtful how many would attend a meeting of inquirers. However, when evening came, I went to the meeting. Dr. Greer came in, and behold; the lecture room, a large one -- I think nearly as large as the body of the church above, was full.

After praying with them I called on those that felt prepared to submit, and who were willing then and there to pledge themselves to live wholly for God, who were willing to commit themselves to the sovereign mercy of God in Christ Jesus, who were willing to give up all sin, and to renounce it forever, to kneel down, and while I prayed, to commit

themselves to Christ, and inwardly to do what I exhorted them to do.

As soon as I saw that they thoroughly understood me, I called on them to kneel, and knelt myself. There was an awful solemnity pervading the congregation, and the stillness of death, with the exception of my own voice in prayer, and the sobs, and the sighs, and weeping that were heard more or less throughout the congregation.

After spreading the case before God we rose from our knees, and without saying anything farther I pronounced the blessing and dismissed them. Dr. Greer took me cordially by the hand, and smiling said, "I will see you in the morning." He went his way, and I went to my lodgings. At about eleven o'clock, I should judge, a messenger came running over to my lodgings, and called me, and said that Dr. Greer was dead. I inquired what it meant. He said that he had just retired, and was taken with a fit of apoplexy, and died immediately.

From day to day, I had my hands, my head, and my heart entirely full. There was no pastor to help me, and the work spread on every hand. The revival made a thorough sweep in the families of those members of the church that entered into the work.

From Reading I went to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, at that time and until his death, the home of the late President Buchanan. I remained at Lancaster but a very short time. However, the work of God was immediately revived, the Spirit of God being poured out almost at once upon the people.

Chapter VI.
REVIVALS IN COLUMBIA, NEW YORK, ROCHESTER,

AUBURN, AND BOSTON.

From Lancaster, about mid-summer, 1830, I returned to Oneida county, New York, an spent a short time at my father-in-law's. A messenger came from the town of Columbia, in Herkimer County, requesting me to go down and assist in a work of grace there, which was already commenced. Their pastor was a young man by the name of H----. He was of German descent, and from Pennsylvania.

Mr. H---- labored with all his might. He visited, and preached, and prayed, and held meetings, and the interest increased. Thus the work had been going on for some time, when he heard that I was in Oneida county, and sent the messenger for me. I

found him a warm-hearted young convert. He listened to my preaching with almost irrepressible joy. I found the congregation large and interested; and so far as I could judge, the work was in a very prosperous, healthful state. That revival continued to spread until it reached and converted nearly all the inhabitants of the town.

After I returned to Whitestown, I was invited to visit the city of New York. Anson G. Phelps, since well-known as a great contributor, by will, to the leading benevolent institutions of our country, hearing that I had not been invited to the pulpits of that city, hired a vacant church in Vandewater Street, and sent me an urgent request to come there and preach. I did so, and there we had a powerful revival.

From Vandewater Street, we went to Prince Street, and there formed a church, mostly of persons that had been converted during our meetings in Vandewater Street. I continued my labors in Prince Street for some months, I think until quite the latter part of summer.

This revival prepared the way, in New York, for the organization of the Free Presbyterian churches in the city. Those churches were composed afterward, largely, of the converts of that revival. Many of them had belonged to the church in Prince Street.

Leaving New York I spent a few weeks in Whitestown; and, as was common, being pressed to go in many directions, I was greatly at a loss what was my duty. But among others, an urgent invitation was received from the Third Presbyterian church in Rochester to go there and supply them for a season.

I had never, I believe, except in rare instances, until I went to Rochester, used as a means of promoting revivals, what has since been called "the anxious seat." I had sometimes asked persons in the congregation to stand up; but this I had not frequently done. However, I had felt for some time, that something more was necessary to bring them out from among the mass of the ungodly, to a public renunciation of their sinful ways, and a public committal of themselves to God.

The three churches, and indeed Christians of every denomination generally, seemed to make common cause, and went to work with a will, to pull sinners out of the fire. We were obliged to hold meetings almost continually. I preached nearly every night, and three times on the Sabbath. We held our meetings of inquiry, after the work took on such a powerful type, very frequently in the morning.

This revival made a great change in the moral state

and subsequent history of Rochester. The great majority of the leading men and women in the city, were converted. A great number of very striking incidents occurred, that I shall not soon forget.

I have not said much, as yet, of the spirit of prayer that prevailed in this revival, which I must not omit to mention. The spirit of prayer was poured out powerfully, so much so, that some persons stayed away from the public services to pray, being unable to restrain their feelings under preaching.

And here I must introduce the name of Mr. Abel Clary. He was the son of a very excellent man, and an elder of the church were I was converted. He was converted in the same revival in which I was. He had been licensed to preach; but his spirit of prayer was such, he was so burdened with the souls of men, that he was not able to preach much, his whole time and strength being given to prayer. The burden of his soul would frequently be so great that he was unable to stand, and he would writhe and groan in agony. I was well acquainted with him and knew something of the wonderful spirit of prayer that was upon him. He was a very silent man, as almost all are who have that powerful spirit of prayer.

I knew at the time a considerable number of men who were exercised in the same way. A Deacon P---

-, of Camden, Oneida county; a Deacon T----, of Rodman, Jefferson county; a Deacon B----, of Adams, in the same county; this Mr. Clary, and many others among the men, and a large number of women, partook of the same spirit, and spent a great part of their time in prayer. Father Nash, as we called him, who in several of my fields of labor came to me and aided me, was another of those men that had such a powerful spirit of prevailing prayer.

The greatness of the work at Rochester, at that time, attracted so much of the attention of ministers and Christians throughout the State of New York, throughout New England, and in many parts of the United States, that the very fame of it was an efficient instrument in the hands of the Spirit of God in promoting the greatest revival of religion throughout the land, that this country had then ever witnessed.

Years after this, in conversing with Dr. Beecher about this powerful revival and its results, he remarked: "That was the greatest work of God, and the greatest revival of religion, that the world had ever seen, in so short a time. One hundred thousand," he remarked, "were reported as having connected themselves with churches, as the result of that great revival. This," he said, "is unparalleled

in the history of the Church, and of the progress of religion." He spoke of this having been done in one year; and said that in no year during the Christian era, had we any account of so great a revival of religion.

During the latter part of the time that I was at Rochester, my health was poor. In the meantime, I was invited to many fields; and among others, I was urged by Dr. Nott, president of Union College, of Schenectady, to go and labour with him, and if possible secure the conversion of his numerous students. I made up my mind to comply with his request.

In company with Dr. Wisner and Josiah Bissell, I started in the stage, in the spring of the year 1831, when the going was exceedingly bad. Sometimes we could not get on more than two miles an hour, and we had been two or three days in going from Rochester to Auburn. As I had many dear friends in Auburn, and was very much fatigued, I made up my mind to stop there, and rest till the next stage.

In the morning after sleeping quietly at Mr. S----'s, I had risen, and was preparing to take the stage, which was to arrive in the early part of the day, when a gentleman came in with a request for me to remain -- a request in writing. The pastor and the

members of his church pressed me with all their influence, to remain and preach, and comply with the request of these men. I told the pastor and his elders that I was very much fatigued, and nearly worn out; but that upon certain conditions I would remain. I would preach twice upon the Sabbath, and two evening during the week; but that they should take all the rest of the labor upon their own hands.

The word took immediate effect. On the first or second Sabbath evening that I preached, I saw that the word was taking such powerful hold that at the close I called for those whose minds were made up, to come forward, publicly renounce their sins, and give themselves to Christ. Much to my own surprise and very much to the surprise of the pastor and many members of the church, the first man that I observed as coming forward and leading the way, was the man that had led, and exerted more influence than any other man, in the opposition to the former revival. He came forward promptly, followed by a large number of the persons who had signed that paper; and that evening there was such a demonstration made as to produce a general interest throughout the place.

The pastor told me afterward, that he found that in the six weeks that I was there, five hundred souls

had been converted. Near the close of my labors here, a messenger arrived from Buffalo, with an earnest request that I should visit that city. I spent but about one month, I think, at Buffalo; during which time a large number of persons were hopefully converted.

From Buffalo I went, in June, I think, to my father-in-law's, in Whitestown. I spent a part of the summer in journeying for recreation, and for the restoration of my health and strength.

Early in the autumn of 1831, I accepted an invitation to hold what was then called "a protracted meeting," or a series of meetings, in Providence. I labored mostly in the church of which Rev. Dr. Wilson was at that time pastor. The Lord poured out His Spirit immediately upon the people, and the work of grace commenced and went forward in a most interesting manner.

While I was at Providence, the question of my going to Boston was agitated by the ministers and deacons of the several Congregational churches of that city. I was not myself aware of what they were doing there; but Dr. Wisner, then pastor of the Old South church, came over to Providence and attended our meetings. I afterwards learned that he was sent over by the ministers, "to spy out the land

and bring back a report."

After Dr. Wisner returned to Boston, I soon received a request from the Congregational ministers and churches to go to that city and labor. I began my labors by preaching around in the different churches on the Sabbath, and on week evenings I preached in Park Street. I soon saw that the word of God was taking effect and that the interest was increasing from day to day. But I perceived also that there needed to be a great searching among professed Christians. I could not learn that there was among them anything like the spirit of prayer that had prevailed in the revivals at the West and in New York city.

After I had spend some weeks, in preaching about in the different congregations, I consented to supply Mr. Green's church in Essex Street statedly, for a time. I therefore concentrated my labors upon that field. We had a blessed work of grace; and a large number of persons were converted in different parts of the city.

Some earnest brethren wrote to me from New York, proposing to lease a theatre, and fit it up for a church, upon condition that I would come there and preach. They proposed to get what was called the "Chatham Street theatre," in the heart of the most

irreligious population of New York. It was owned by men who were willing to have it transformed into a church. At this time we had three children, and I could not well take my family with me, while laboring as an evangelist. My strength, too, had become a good deal exhausted; and on praying and looking the matter over, I concluded that I would accept the call from the Second Free church, and labor, for a time at least, in New York.

Chapter VII.
REVIVALS IN NEW YORK, OBERLIN, AND BOSTON.

Mr. Lewis Tappan, with other Christian brethren, leased the Chatham Street theatre, and fitted it up for a church, and as a suitable place to accommodate the various charitable societies, in holding their anniversaries. They called me, and I accepted the pastorate of the Second Free Presbyterian church. I left Boston in April, 1832, and commenced labors in that theatre, at that time. The Spirit of the Lord was immediately poured out upon us, and we had an extensive revival that spring and summer.

The work continued to go forward, in a very interesting manner. We held meetings of inquiry once or twice a week, a goodly number of conversions were reported. The church were a praying, working people. They were thoroughly united, were well trained in regard to labors for the conversion of sinners, and were a most devoted and efficient church of Christ. They would go out into the highways and hedges, and bring people to hear preaching, whenever they were called upon to do so. Both men and women would undertake this work.

I wanted to secure the conversion of the ungodly, to the utmost possible extent. We therefore gave ourselves to labor for that class of persons, and by the blessing of God, with good success. Conversions were multiplied so much that our church would soon become so large that we would send off a colony; and when I left New York, I think, we had seven free churches, whose members were laboring with all their might to secure the salvation of souls.

In January, 1834, I was obliged to leave on account of my health, and take a sea voyage. I went up the Mediterranean, therefore, on a small brig, in the midst of winter. We had a very stormy passage. My

state room was small, and I was on the whole, very uncomfortable; and the voyage did not much improve my health. I spend some weeks at Malta, and also in Sicily.

On my homeward passage my mind became exceedingly exercised on the question of revivals. I feared that they would decline throughout the country. I feared that the opposition that had been made to them, had grieved the Holy Spirit. My own health, it appeared to me, had nearly or quite broken down; and I knew of no other evangelist that would take the field, and aid pastors in revival work.

This view of the subject distressed me so much that one day I found myself unable to rest. My soul was in utter agony. I spend almost the entire day in prayer in my state room, or walking the deck in intense agony, in view of the state of things. In fact I felt crushed with the burden that was on my soul. There was no one on board to whom I could open my mind, or say a word.

It was the spirit of prayer that was upon me; that which I had often before experienced in kind but perhaps never before to such a degree, for so long a time. I besought the Lord to go on with His work, and to provide Himself with such instrumentalities as were necessary. It was a long summer day in the

early part of July.

After a day of unspeakable wrestling and agony in my soul, just at night, the subject cleared up to my mind. The Spirit led me to believe that all would come out right, and that God had yet a work for me to do; that I might be at rest; that the Lord would go forward with His work, and give me strength to take any part in it that He desired. But I had not the least idea what the course of His providence would be.

On my return to New York, in the fall, Mr. Leavitt came to me and said, "Brother Finney, I have ruined the Evangelist, unless you can do something to bring the paper back to public favor again."

I told him my health was such that I did not know what I could do; but I would make it a subject of prayer. He said if I could write a series of articles on revivals, he had no doubt it would restore the paper immediately to public favor. After considering it a day or two, I proposed to preach a course of lectures to my people, on revivals of religion, which he might report for his paper. He caught at this at once. Says he, "That is the very thing"; and in the next number of his paper he advertised the course of lectures. This had the effect he desired, and he soon after told me that the subscription list was very rapidly increasing.

I began the course of lectures immediately, and continued them through the winter, preaching one each week. These lectures were afterward published in a book, and called, "Finney's Lectures on Revivals."

These revival lectures, meager as was the report of them, and feeble as they were in themselves, have been instrumental, as I have learned, in promoting revivals in England, and Scotland, and Wales, in Europe in various places, in Canada East and West, in Nova Scotia and in some of the islands of the sea. When they were first published in the New York Evangelist, the reading of them resulted in revivals of religion in multitudes of places throughout this country.

But this was not of man's wisdom. Let the reader remember that long day of agony and prayer at sea, that God would do something to forward the work of revivals, and enable me, if He desired to do it, to take such a course as to help forward the work. I felt certain then that my prayers would be answered; and I have regarded all that I have since been able to accomplish, as, in a very important sense, an answer to the prayers of that day.

Soon after I returned to New York, I commenced my labors in the Tabernacle. The Spirit of the Lord was

poured out upon us, and we had a precious revival, as long as I continued to be pastor of that church.

In January, 1835, Rev. John Jay Shipherd, of Oberlin, and Rev. Asa Mahan, of Cincinnati, arrived in New York, to persuade me to go to Oberlin, as professor of theology. Mr. Shipherd had founded a colony, and organized a school at Oberlin, about a year before this time, and had obtained a charter broad enough for a university.

We had several consultations on the subject. The brethren in New York who were interested in the question, offered, if I would go and spend half of each year in Oberlin, to endow the institution, so far as the professorships were concerned, and to do it immediately.

I had never thought of having my labors at Oberlin interfere with my revival labors and preaching. It was therefore agreed between myself and the church, that I should spend my winters in New York, and my summers at Oberlin; and that the church would be at the expense of my going and coming. When this was arranged, I took my family and arrived in Oberlin at the beginning of summer, 1835.

Agreeably to my arrangement in New York, I spend my summers at Oberlin, and my winters at New

York, for two or three years. We had a blessed reviving, whenever I returned to preach there. We also had a revival here continually. Very few students came here then without being converted. But my health soon became such that I found, I must relinquish one of these fields of labor. But the interests connected with the college, seemed to forbid utterly that I should leave it. I therefore took a dismission from my church in New York, and the winter months which I was to have spent in New York, I spent laboring in various places, to promote revivals of religion.

In the meantime, the excitement on the subject of slavery was greatly agitating the eastern cities, as well as the West and the South. Our friend, Mr. Willard Sears, of Boston, was braving a tempest of opposition there. In 1842, I was strongly urged to go and occupy the Marlborough chapel and preach for a few months. I went and began my labors, and preached with all my might for two months. The Spirit of the Lord was immediately poured out, and there was a general agitation among the dry bones. I was visited at my room almost constantly, during every day of the week, by inquirers from all parts of the city, and many were obtaining hopes from day to day.

At this time Elder Knapp, the well-known Baptist revivalist, was laboring in Providence, and under much opposition. He was invited by the Baptist brethren at Boston to come and labor there. He therefore left Providence and came to Boston. At the same time, Mr. Josiah Chapin and many others, were insisting very strongly upon my coming and holding meetings in Providence. It was a great trial for me to leave Boston, at this time. However, after seeing brother Knapp and informing him of the state of things, I left and went to Providence. This was the time of the great revival in Boston.

In the meantime, I commenced my labors in Providence. The work began almost immediately, and the interest visibly increased from day to day. There was a very large Sabbath-school room in the basement of the church. The number of inquirers had become too large, and the congregation too much crowded, to call the inquirers forward, as I had done in some places; and I therefore requested them to go down, after the blessing was pronounced, to the lecture-room below.

From night to night, after preaching, that room would be filled with rejoicing young converts, and trembling, inquiring sinners. This state of things continued for two months. I was then, as I thought,

completely tired out; having labored incessantly for four months, two in Boston and two in Providence. Beside, the time of year had come, or nearly come, for the opening of our spring term in Oberlin. I therefore took my leave of Providence, and started for home.

After resting a day or two in Boston, I left for home. Being very weary with labor and travels, I called on a friend at Rochester, to take a day's rest before proceeding farther. As soon as it was known that I was in Rochester, Judge G---- called on me and with much earnestness, requested me to stop and preach. Some of the ministers also, insisted upon my stopping, and preaching for them. I finally consented to stop, and preach a sermon or two, and did so.

In the meantime, Judge G---- had united with others members of the bar in a written request to me to preach a course of sermons to lawyers, adapted to their ways of thinking. A large number of the lawyers were converted, Judge G----, I might say, at their head, as he had taken the lead in coming out on the side of Christ.

I remained there, at that time, two months. The revival became wonderfully interesting and powerful, and resulted in the conversion of great

numbers.

In the fall of 1843, I was called again to Boston. During this winter, the Lord gave my own soul a very thorough overhauling, and a fresh baptism of His Spirit.

I gave myself to a great deal of prayer. After my evening services, I would retire as early as I well could; but rose at four o'clock in the morning, because I could sleep no longer, and immediately went to the study, and engaged in prayer. And so deeply was my mind exercised, and so absorbed in prayer, that I frequently continued from the time I arose, at four o'clock, till the gong called to breakfast, at eight o'clock.

My days were spent, so far as I could get time, in searching the Scriptures. I read nothing else all that winter but my Bible; and a great deal of it seemed new to me. Again the Lord took me, as it were, from Genesis to Revelation. He led me to see the connection of things, the promises, threatenings, the prophecies and their fulfillment; and indeed, the whole Scripture seemed to me all ablaze with light, and not only light, but it seemed as if God's word was instinct with the very life of God.

At this time it seemed as if my soul was wedded to

Christ, in a sense in which I had never had any thought or conception before. I not only had all the freshness of my first love, but a vast accession to it. Indeed the Lord lifted me so much above anything that I had experienced before, and taught me so much of the meaning of the Bible, of Christ's relations, and power, and willingness, that I often found myself saying to Him, "I had not known or conceived that any such thing was true." I then realized what is meant by the saying that He "is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Chapter VIII.
FIRST VISIT TO ENGLAND.

Having had repeated and urgent invitations to visit England, and labor for the promotion of revivals in that country, I embarked with my wife, in the autumn of 1849, and after a stormy passage, we arrived at Southampton, early in November. There we met the pastor of the church in Houghton, a village situated midway between the market towns of Huntingdon and Saint Ives. A Mr. Potto Brown, a very benevolent man, of whom I shall have occasion to speak frequently, had sent Mr. James Harcourt, his

pastor, to meet us at Southampton.

When we arrived there, and had rested a few days, I began my labors in the village chapel. I soon found that Mr. Brown was altogether a remarkable man. Although brought up a Quaker, he was entirely catholic in his views, and was laboring, in an independent way, directly for the salvation of the people around him.

A revival immediately commenced, and spread among the people. The work spread among those that came from the neighboring villages. They heard and gladly received the word. And so extensive and thorough was the work among Mr. Brown's particular friends, whose conversion he had been longing and praying for, that before I left, he said that every one of them was converted, that the Lord had not left one of them out, for whom he had felt anxiety, and for whose conversion he had been praying.

I did not remain in Houghton at this time; several weeks, however. Among the brethren who had written, urging me to come to England, was a Mr. Roe, a Baptist minister of Birmingham. As soon as he was informed that I was in England, he came to Houghton, and spent several days, attending the meetings and witnessing the results.

About the middle of December we left Houghton, and went to Birmingham, to labor in the congregation of Mr. Roe. For some weeks I confined my labors to Mr. Roe's congregation, and there was a powerful revival, such a movement as they had never seen. The revival swept through the congregation with great power, and a very large proportion of the impenitent were turned to Christ. Mr. Roe entered heart and soul into the work.

From Birmingham I went to Worcester, I think, about the middle of March, to labor with Dr. Redford. Dr. Redford was greatly affected by the work in Worcester; and at the May anniversaries in London, he addressed the Congregational Union of England and Wales, and gave a very interesting account of this work. I attended those May meetings, being about to commence labor with Dr. John Campbell, in London.

I had accepted Dr. Campbell's cordial invitation to supply his pulpit for a time, and accordingly, after the May meetings I put in, in earnest, for a revival. Our congregations were very large; and always on Sabbath, and Sabbath evenings, the house was crowded.

After preaching for several weeks, in the manner that I have described, I knew it was time to call for

inquirers. On the Sabbath morning I said to Dr. Campbell, "You have a communion service tonight, and I must have a meeting of inquiry at the same time. Have you any room, anywhere on the premises, to which I can invite inquirers after preaching?" "Why, yes," he said, "there is the British school-room. But that will hold fifteen or sixteen hundred; of course you don't want that." "Yes," said I, "that is the very room."

I preached a short sermon and then informed the people what I desired. I was determined not to have the mass of people go into the room; and furthermore, that those who did go, should go with the express understanding that they were inquiring sinners. I therefore proceeded very particularly to point out the class of persons whom I wished to attend, and the manner in which they would find the place. I then dismissed the meeting, and the congregation retired.

When I entered I found the room packed. I addressed them for a short time, on the question of immediate duty; and endeavoured, as I always do, to make them understand that God required of them then to yield themselves entirely to His will, to ground their weapons of rebellion, make their submission to Him as their rightful sovereign, and

accept Jesus as their only Redeemer.

After this I held similar meetings, with similar results, frequently on Sabbath evening, while I remained with that congregation, which was in all nine months. The interest rose and extended so far, that the inquirers could not be accommodated in that large British school-room; and frequently when I saw that the impression on the congregation was very general and deep, after giving them suitable instructions, and bringing them face to face with the question of unqualified and present surrender of all to Christ, I would call on those that were prepared in mind to do this, to stand up on their places, while we offered them to God in prayer.

Frequently when I made these calls, for people to arise and offer themselves while we offered them in prayer, many hundreds would arise; and on some occasions, if the house seated as many as was supposed, not less than two thousand people sometimes arose, when an appeal was made.

The interest was so great, that a place of worship that would hold many thousands, would have been just as full as the Tabernacle. Whence they all came, Dr. Campbell did not know, and no one could tell; but that hundreds and thousands of them were converted, there is no reason to doubt. Indeed, I

saw and conversed with vast numbers, and labored in this way to the full limit of my strength.

My mind was greatly exercised about the state of London. I was scarcely ever more drawn out in prayer for any city or place than I was for London. Sometimes, when I prayed, in public especially, it seemed, with the multitudes before me, as if I could not stop praying, and that the spirit of prayer would almost draw me out of myself, in pleadings for the people, and for the city at large.

I left England with great reluctance. On the day that we sailed, a multitude of people who had been interested in our labors, gathered upon the wharf. A great majority of them were young converts. Thus closed our labors in England, on our first visit there.

Chapter IX.
REVIALS IN HARTFORD, WESTERN, ROCHESTER AND BOSTON.

We arrived in Oberlin in May, 1851, and after the usual labors of the Summer, we left in the autumn to go to Hartford, and hold a series of meetings. I was invited by Rev. William W. Patton, who was then pastor of one of the Congregational churches of that

city.

Very soon after I began my labors there, a powerful revival influence was manifested among the people. In this revival there was a great deal of praying. The young converts especially, gave themselves to very much prayer. A very interesting state of things spring up at this time in the public schools. One morning a large number of lads, as I was told, when they came together, were so affected that they could not study, and asked their teacher to pray for them. This brought a severe pressure upon him. But it resulted, I believe, in his giving his own heart to God, and in his taking measures for the conversion of the school.

The next winter we left Oberlin at the usual season and started east to go to the city of Syracuse to labor. I preached one Sabbath, and learned so much about the state of things as to be induced to remain another Sabbath. Soon I began to perceive a movement among the dry bones. The interest continued to increase and to spread. The Lord removed the obstacles, and brought Christian people nearer together.

After I left, the churches all secured pastors. I have been informed that the revival resulted in great and permanent good. The Congregational church built

them a larger house of worship; and have been, I believe, ever since a healthy church and congregation. The Presbyterian churches, and I believe the Baptist churches, were much strengthened in faith and increased in numbers.

The next winter, at Christmas time, we went again to Western, Oneida county, where as I have already related, I commenced my labors in the autumn of 1825. The people were at this time again without a minister; and we spent several weeks there in very interesting labor, and with very marked results.

The revival was of a very interesting character; and there was a goodly number of souls born of God. These two seasons of my being in Western were about thirty years apart. Another generation had come to live in that place from that which lived there in the first revival in which I labored there. I found, however, a few of the old members there. But the congregation was mostly new, and composed principally of younger people who had grown up after the first revival.

The state of religion in Western has, I believe, been very much improved since this last revival. The ordinances of the Gospel have been maintained, and I believe considerable progress has been made in the right direction.

In the autumn of 1855, we were called again to the city of Rochester to labor for souls. We commenced our labors there, and it was very soon apparent that the Spirit of God was working among the people. We held daily noon prayer-meetings, which were largely attended, and in which a most excellent spirit prevailed.

What was quite remarkable in the three revivals that I have witnessed in Rochester, they all commenced and made their first progress among the higher classes of society. This was very favorable to the general spread of the work, and to the overcoming of opposition.

The blessed work of grace extended and increased until it seemed as if the whole city would be converted. As in the former revivals, the work spread from this centre to the surrounding towns and villages. It has been quite remarkable that revivals in Rochester have had so great an influence upon other cities and villages far and near.

The next summer we accepted an invitation to labor again in Boston. We began our labors at Park Street and the Spirit of God immediately manifested His willingness to save souls.

The work was quite extensive that Winter in Boston,

and many very striking cases of conversion occurred. We laboured there until Spring, and then thought it necessary to return to our labors at home. But it was very manifest that the work in that city was by no means done; and we left with the promise that, the Lord willing, we would return and labor there the next Winter. Accordingly the next Summer we returned to Boston.

This Winter of 1857-58 will be remembered as the time when a great revival prevailed throughout all the Northern states. It swept over the land with such power, that for a time it was estimated that not less than fifty thousand conversion occurred in a single week. This revival had some peculiarly interesting features. It was carried on to a large extent through lay influence, so much so as to almost throw the ministers into the shade.

One of our daily prayer-meetings was held at Park Street church, which would be full whenever it was open for prayer; and this was the case with many other meetings in different parts of the city. The population, large as it was, seemed to be moved throughout. The revival became too general to keep any account at all of the number of conversions, or to allow of any estimate being made that would approximate the truth. All classes of people were

enquiring everywhere. A divine influence seemed to pervade the whole land. It was estimated that during this revival not less than five hundred thousand souls were converted in this country.

The answers to prayer were constant, and so striking as to arrest the attention of the people generally throughout the land. It was evident that in answer to prayer the windows of heaven were opened and the Spirit of God poured out like a flood. The New York Tribune at that time published several extras, filled with accounts of the progress of the revival in different parts of the United States.

The church and ministry in this country had become so very extensively engaged in promoting the revival, and such was the blessing of God attending the exertions of laymen as well as of ministers, that I made up my mind to return and spend another season in England, and see if the same influence would not pervade that country.

Chapter X.
SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND, AND LAST DAYS AT HOME.

We sailed for Liverpool in the steamer Persia, in

December, 1858. Our friend Brown came to Liverpool to meet us, to induce us to labor in Houghton for a season, before we committed ourselves to any other field. Immediately on our arrival, I received a great number of letters from different parts of England, expressing great joy at our return and inviting us to come and labor in many different fields. However I spent several weeks labouring in Houghton, and St. Ives, where we saw precious revivals. In St. Ives they had never had a revival before.

Mr. Harcourt, the former pastor at Houghton, had proved himself a very successful minister, and had been called to London, to Borough Road Chapel. As soon as we could leave St. Ives we went to London, to see what could be done in his church and congregation. It was very soon perceptible that the Spirit of God was poured out, and that the church was very generally in a state of great conviction. The work deepened and spread till it reached, I believe, every household belonging to that congregation.

After I had finished my labors at Borough Road Chapel, we left London and rested for a few weeks at Houghton. Such was the state of my health that I thought I must return home. But Dr. F----, an

excellent Christian man living in Huntingdon, urged us very much to go to his house and finish our rest, and let him do what he could for me as a physician. We accepted his invitation and went to his house.

After remaining at the Doctor's two or three weeks, without medicine, my health became such that I began to preach. There never had been a revival in Huntingdon, and they really had no conception of what a revival would be. I occupied what they called "Temperance Hall," the only large hall in the town. It was immediately filled, and the Spirit of the Lord was soon poured out on the people.

The revival took a very general hold of the church, and of professors of religion in that town, and spread extensively among the unconverted; and greatly changed the religious aspect of the town.

From Huntingdon we returned to London, and labored for several weeks in the north-eastern part of the city, in several chapels occupied by a branch of the Methodist Church. One of the places of worship was in Spitalsfield, the house having been originally built, I think, by the Huguenots. It was a commodious place of worship, and we had a glorious work of grace there, which continued till late in the summer.

While I was at this time in London, I was invited very urgently to visit Edinburgh in Scotland; and about the middle of August we left London and took passage by steam up the coast, through the German ocean, to Edinburgh. I had been urged to go there by the Rev. Dr. Kirk, of Edinburgh, who belonged to the portion of the church in Scotland called the Evangelical Union church.

I remained three months in Edinburgh, preaching mostly in Dr. Kirk's church, which was one of the largest places of worship in Edinburgh. We had a very interesting revival in that place, and many souls were converted. Church members were greatly blessed, and Mr. Kirk's hands were full, day and night, of labors among inquirers.

After remaining in Edinburgh three months, and seeing there a blessed work of grace, we accepted an invitation to go to Aberdeen. We were invited there by a Mr. Ferguson. At first I could not get a hearing except with his own people. The work in Mr. Ferguson's congregation had begun, and was getting into a very interesting state. Numbers had been converted, and a very interesting change was manifestly coming over his congregation and over that city. But in the meantime I had so committed myself to go to Bolton that I found I must go; and we

left Aberdeen just before the Christmas holidays and went to Bolton.

Bolton is a city of about thirty thousand inhabitants lying a few miles from Manchester. It is in the heart of the great manufacturing district of England. Our first meeting was in the chapel occupied by Mr. Davison who had sent for me to come to Bolton. Through the whole of that week the spirit of prayer seemed to be increasing, and our meetings had greater and greater power. About the third or fourth day of our meetings, I should think, it fell to the turn of a Mr. Best, also a Congregational minister at Bolton, to have the meeting in his chapel. There, for the first time, I called for inquirers. After addressing the congregation for some time, in a strain calculated to lead to that point, I called for inquirers, and his vestry was thronged with them. We had an impressive meeting with them, and many of them I trust submitted to God.

There was a temperance hall in the city, which would accommodate more people than any of the chapels. After this week of prayer, the brethren secured the hall for preaching; and I began to preach there twice on the Sabbath, and four evenings in the week. Soon the interest became very general. The hall would be crowded every

night, so that not another person could get so much as within the door. The Spirit of God was poured out copiously.

I then recommended to the brethren to canvass the whole city; to go two and two, and visit every house; and if permitted, to pray in every house in the city. They immediately and courageously rallied to perform this work.

Of course in such a state of things as this, the work would spread rapidly among the unconverted. All classes of persons, high and low, rich and poor, male and female became interested. I was in the habit, every evening I preached, of calling upon inquires to come forward and take seats in the front of the stand. Great numbers would come forward, crowding as best they could through the dense masses that filled every nook and corner of the house. The hall was not only large on its ground floor, but had a gallery, which was always thronged. After the inquirers had come forward, we engaged in a prayer-meeting, having several prayers in succession while the inquirers knelt before the Lord.

The fame of this work spread abroad, and soon persons began to come in large numbers from Manchester to Bolton to attend our meetings; and this, as was always the case, created a

considerable excitement in that city, and a desire to have me come thither as soon as I could. However I remained in Bolton I think about three months, perhaps more. The work became so powerful that it broke in upon all classes, and every description of persons.

My wife and myself were both of us a good deal exhausted by these labors. But in April we went to Manchester. We continued in Manchester till about the first of August; and the revival continued to increase and spread up to that time.

On the second of August, 1860, we left Manchester and went down to Liverpool. A goodly number of our friends went down with us, and remained over night. On the morning of the third, we left in the Persia for New York.

We had had very little rest in England for a year and a half. Indeed we arrived a good deal exhausted. I was myself hardly able to preach at all. However the state of things was such, and the time of year such, that I could not, as I supposed, afford to rest.

We held daily prayer-meetings in the church, which were largely attended. Besides preaching twice on Sabbath, and holding a meeting of inquiry in the evening of every Sabbath, I preached several

evenings during the week. The revival became very general through the place, and seemed to bid fair to make a clean sweep of the unconverted in the place.

Since 1860, although continually pressed by churches, east and west, to come and labor as an evangelist, I have not dared to comply with their request. I have been able, by the blessing of God, to perform a good deal of labor here; but I have felt inadequate to the exposure and labor of attempting to secure revivals abroad.

CONCLUSION.

Those who have read the preceding pages, will naturally inquire in reference to the closing years of a life so full of labor and of usefulness. The narrative, completed with the beginning of 1868, leaves Mr. Finney still pastor of the First church in Oberlin, and lecturer in the seminary.

His last day on earth was a quiet Sabbath, which he enjoyed in the midst of his family, walking out with his wife at sunset, to listen to the music, at the opening of the evening service in the church near by. Upon retiring he was seized with pains, which

seemed to indicate some affection of the heart; and after a few hours of suffering, as the morning dawned, he died. August 16th, 1875, lacking two weeks of having completed his eighty-third year

An Outline of His "Systematic Theology"
REVIVAL TRUTHS
by Charles G. Finney
[Edited by William Allen]

Chapter 1

MORAL LAW

Moral agents possess intellect, or the faculty of knowledge. They also possess sensibility, or in other words the faculty of feeling. They also possess will, or the power of choosing or refusing in every case of moral obligation. Man is a moral agent. All praise and blame which all men award to each other, is founded upon the universal acknowledgement of this truth.

These primary faculties are so correlated to each other, that the intellect or the sensibility may control the will, or the will may, in a certain sense, control

them. That is, the mind is free to choose in accordance with the demands of the intellect which is the law-giving faculty, or with the desires and impulses of the sensibility, or to control and direct them both.

The will can either command or obey. It can suffer itself to be enslaved by the impulses of the sensibility, or it can assert its sovereignty and control them. We are conscious of affirming to ourselves our obligation to obey the law of the intellect rather than the impulses of the sensibility; that to act virtuously we must act rationally, or intelligently, and not give ourselves up to the blind impulses of our feelings.

I. WHOSE RIGHT IT IS TO GOVERN.

Moral beings exist. They must of necessity be happy or miserable. Moral law is that mode of moral action that exactly accords with the nature and relations of moral beings. Conformity to this law is virtue. Virtue is the cause of happiness. Happiness is an ultimate good. Happiness is the ultimate end of government. Upon moral government as a means of promoting this end, both ruler and ruled are dependent.

He has a right to govern, who possesses such attributes, such a character, is so circumstanced, and sustains such relations as to be both able and willing to secure the highest good of the whole. Upon him all eyes are, or ought to be, turned, to sustain this office. It is both his right and duty to govern; for upon him all are naturally dependent, for securing the highest interests of the whole. It is therefore the right and duty of God to administer the moral government of the universe.

II. ALL THE COMMANDMENTS ARE DECLARATORY, AND ARE BUT THE APPLICATION OF THE ONE ONLY LAW OF LOVE.

All God's moral attributes are modifications of one principle; that is--benevolence. All virtue in moral beings is only different modification of benevolence. Perfect, perpetual, and universal benevolence, modified by the relations and circumstances of moral beings, is their whole duty.

If benevolence, in its various modifications, is the whole of virtue, then all God's requirements must be in spirit one. Love expresses and comprehends the whole. The command to love God with all the heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, is identical in

spirit and meaning with the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour like thyself."

These two commands might both be united in one precept: Thou shalt regard and treat all interests, beings and things according to their relative value in the scale of being. Thus the two great principles of law are identical in spirit, yet two in their letter. The Ten Commandments are proofs and illustrations of this Truth.

FIRST COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:3 "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

1. Reasons for this commandment: God's happiness is infinitely the greatest good in the universe, and therefore thus to regard and treat it, is right in itself. To render to God the highest degree of benevolence, gratitude, and complacent love, is demanded by the very laws of our being.

2. The true meaning and spirit of this command: This command prohibits the love of any being or thing more than God. It requires the highest degree of benevolence or good-will to God, of which we are capable. It requires the deepest repentance on the part of sinners, of which they are naturally capable. It requires the most perfect and perpetual consecration of our whole being, time, talents,

possessions, and all we have, and are, to God.

SECOND COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:4-6 "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them."

1. Reason for this commandment: God is a spirit. All visible representations of God, by pictures, images, or other means, are utterly deceptive, and convey gross, false, abominable, and ruinous ideas of God.

THIRD COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:7 "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

1. The true spirit of this commandment: It requires a feeling of the utmost holy awe, reverence, love, and respect for God. The happiness of the universe depends on their virtue. Their virtue consists in obedience to God; and their obedience to God depends upon the light in which they regard Him. Therefore, the highest good of the universe demands that God should respect His name, and never suffer it to be trifled with.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:9-11 "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work."

1. What this implies: That all this be done in the spirit of love to God, and not in a legal and self-righteous temper.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:12 "Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days my be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

1. What is implied in this requirement: This requirement implies that the parent practically recognize his relations to the child; for if he cast the child out helpless into the street, and refuse or neglect to recognize his relation, the true spirit of this command cannot require the child to honour him as a parent, but simply to regard him as a fellow-being, and to treat him according to the universal law of benevolence. It requires that both parents and children should fulfill to each other all those duties that will, in the highest degree, promote their individual and domestic happiness, holiness, and peace.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:13 "Thou shalt not kill."

1. What is prohibited by the letter of this precept: The letter of this precept prohibits the unnecessary destruction of life, whether of men or animals.

2. What is the true spirit of this requirement: There

can be no exceptions to the spirit of a commandment, but to the letter there may be exceptions. Gen. 9:3 "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." Here is a general permission to kill animals for the food of man.

3. Some cases to be regarded as violations of this commandment: Every unnecessary violation of the laws of life and health, either in men or animals. Every unnecessary disregard of the command to multiply the number of human beings. Every selfish disposition to lessen the amount of animal life. Every degree of ill-will toward any being. All selfish anger. "He that hateth his brother is a murderer."

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:14 "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

1. What is implied in this commandment: It implies the pre-existence of the institution of marriage. It implies that marriage is recognized as not only already existing but as a divine institution.

2. What its true spirit prohibits: All carnal commerce of married persons with others than their lawful husband or wife. All carnal commerce between unmarried persons. All lewd and unchaste desires, thoughts, and affections. It prohibits all writing,

conversation, pictures, modes of dress, and whatever has a natural tendency to beget in any degree a licentious state of mind; for he who provokes to lust is guilty of the crime of which he is the guilty cause.

3. Reasons for this command: Marriage is a necessity of our nature, both moral and physical. The species must be propagated, and so propagated as to secure the highest physical and moral perfection of the race. But the benefits of marriage will be entirely excluded, unless licentiousness be prevented. Every kind and degree of licentiousness is inconsistent with the highest well-being of mankind.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:15 "Thou shalt not steal."

1. What is implied in this command: That the persons of human beings are their own, or that every human being has a property in himself, and that he is, so far as his fellow-men are concerned, his own proprietor.

2. What the true spirit of this command prohibits: It prohibits the infliction of any injury upon the person, morals, education, reputation, family or property, of a human being, whereby he has less of good than

he would have possessed but for your interference.

It prohibits all refusal to bear your full proportion in building churches, supporting ministers, and sustaining all the institutions of religion. To receive these things gratuitously, is to make slaves of your neighbours, to receive their services for nought, and involves the very principle of theft. Every wrong done or intended to a neighbour, is a violation of his rights, and a violation of the spirit of this commandment.

NINTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:16 "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."

This commandment implies the duty, under certain circumstances, of being true witnesses for or against our neighbour. It prohibits every species of artifice, or designed deception, intended to make any impression contrary to the truth, on any subject, upon one who has a right to know the truth upon that subject.

TENTH COMMANDMENT. Ex. 20:17 "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbour's."

1. What this commandment implies: The right of

property--that a thing may lawfully belong to a neighbor. It implies a right to the exclusive possession and enjoyment of our wives and husbands as such. It implies that every desire to interfere with the exclusive enjoyment of wives by their husbands, or husbands by their wives, as such, is selfishness.

This command prohibits a disposition to possess anything that is inconsistent with the will of God, and the highest good of the universe. The spirit of this commandment enjoins perfect and universal benevolence. It is plainly a declaratory summing up of the spirit of the law of universal benevolence.

REMARKS.

The above commandments are to be regarded only as specimens of the manner of declaring and applying by express statute, the common law of the universe, or the one great, universal, and only law of love.

All the commandments of God were properly summed up by our Saviour, and condensed into two great precepts. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and soul, and mind, and strength; and thy neighbor as thyself." These two precepts

are at once a condensation and a declaration of the whole duty of man to God and his neighbour.

Chapter II
MORAL DEPRAVITY

I. DEFINITION OF THE TERM DEPRAVITY.

The word is derived from the Latin de and pravus. Pravus means, "crooked." De is intensive. Depravo, literally and primarily means, "very crooked," not in the sense of original crookedness, but in the sense of having become crooked, lapsed, fallen, departed from right or straight.

II. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN PHYSICAL AND MORAL DEPRAVITY.

Physical depravity, as the word denotes, is the depravity of constitution, or substance, as distinguished from depravity of free moral action. It may be predicated of matter or mind. Physical depravity can have no moral character. It may, as we shall see, be caused by moral depravity; and a moral agent may be blameworthy for having rendered himself physically depraved, either in body or mind. But physical depravity can have no moral

character in itself, for the plain reason that it is voluntary, and in its nature is disease, and not sin.

Moral depravity is the depravity of free-will, not of the faculty itself, but of its free action. It consists in a violation of moral law. Moral depravity is depravity of choice. It is a choice at variance with moral law, moral right. It is synonymous with sin or sinfulness. It is moral depravity because it has moral character.

III. OF WHAT PHYSICAL DEPRAVITY CAN BE PREDICATED.

1. It can be predicated of any organized substance. Depravity is a possible state of every organized body or substance in existence.

2. As mind, in connection with body, manifests itself through it, acts by means of it, and is dependent upon it, it is plain that if the body becomes diseased, or physically depraved, the mind cannot but be affected by this state of the body, through and by means of which it acts.

The sensibility or feeling department of the mind, may be sadly and physically depraved. This is a matter of common experience. The appetites and passions, the desires and cravings, the antipathies and repellencies of the feelings, fall into great

disorder and anarchy. Numerous artificial appetites are generated and the whole sensibility becomes a wilderness, a chaos of conflicting and clamorous desires, emotions and passions.

IV. OF WHAT MORAL DEPRAVITY CAN BE PREDICATED.

1. Moral depravity cannot be predicated of any involuntary acts or states of mind, for moral law legislates directly, only over free, intelligent choices.

2. Moral depravity cannot be predicated of any unintelligent act of will, that is, of acts of will that are put forth in a state of idiocy, of intellectual derangement, or of sleep. Moral agency implies intelligence, or knowledge of moral relations.

3. Moral depravity can only be predicated of violations of moral law, and of the free volitions by which those violations are perpetrated. Moral law requires love, and only love, to God and man, or to God and the universe. This love is good-will, choice, the choice of an end, the choice of the highest well-being of God, and the universe of sentient existences.

Moral depravity is sin. Sin must consist in choice, in the choice of self-indulgence or self-gratification as

an end.

4. The law of God requires good-willing only, and nothing but acts of will can constitute a violation of moral law. Outward actions, and involuntary thoughts and feelings, may be said in a certain sense to possess moral character, because they are produced by the will. But, strictly speaking, moral character belongs only to choice, or intention.

Sin does not, and cannot consist in the choice of sin or misery as an end, or for its own sake. All sin consists, and must consist in selfishness, or in the choice of self-gratification as a final end. Moral depravity then, strictly speaking, can only be predicated of selfish ultimate intention. Moral depravity consists in a state of voluntary committal of the will to self-gratification. It is a spirit of self-seeking, a voluntary and entire consecration to the gratification of self. It is selfish ultimate intention; it is a choice of a wrong end of life; it is moral depravity, because it is a violation of moral law. It is a refusal to consecrate the whole being to the highest well-being of God and of the universe, and obedience to the moral law.

Moral depravity sustains to the outward life, the relation of a cause. This selfish intention, or the will in this committed state, of course, makes efforts to

secure its end, and these efforts make up the outward life of a selfish man.

V. MANKIND ARE BOTH PHYSICALLY AND MORALLY DEPRAVED.

1. There is in all probability, no perfect health of body among all the ranks and classes of human beings that inhabit this world. The physical organization of the whole race has become impaired, and beyond all doubt has been becoming more and more so since intemperance of any kind was first introduced into our world. Especially is this true of the human sensibility. See that bloated wretch, the inebriate! His appetite for strong drink has played the despot. His whole mind and body, reputation, family, friends, health, time, eternity, all, all are laid by him upon its filthy altar. There is the debauchee, and the glutton, and the gambler, and the miser, and a host of others, each in his turn giving striking and melancholy proof of the monstrous development and physical depravity of the human sensibility.

2. The moral depravity of the human race is everywhere assumed and declared in the Bible, and so universal and notorious is the fact of human selfishness, that should any man practically call it in

question: should he, in his business transactions, and in his intercourse with men, assume the contrary, he would justly subject himself to the charge of insanity.

VI. THE MORAL DEPRAVITY OF MANKIND IS UNIVERSAL.

The Bible exhibits proof of it: --

1. In those passages that represent all the unregenerate as possessing one common wicked heart or character. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:5. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8:7.

2. In those passages that declare the universal necessity of regeneration. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.

3. Passages that expressly assert the universal moral depravity of all unregenerate moral agents of our race. "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews

and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3:9-10.

4. Universal history proves it. What is this world's history but the shameless chronicles of human wickedness?

5. Universal observation attests it. Whoever saw one unregenerate human being that was not selfish, that did not obey his feelings rather than the law of his intelligence, that was not under some form, or in some way, living to please self?

6. I may also appeal to the universal consciousness of the unregenerate. They know themselves to be selfish, and they cannot honestly deny it.

VII. THE MORAL DEPRAVITY OF THE UNREGENERATE MORAL AGENTS OF OUR RACE, IS TOTAL.

By this is intended, that the moral depravity of the unregenerate is without any mixture of moral goodness or virtue, that while they remain unregenerate, they never in any instance, nor in any degree, exercise true love to God and to man. It is not intended that they may not perform many outward actions, and have many inward feelings,

that are such as the regenerate perform and experience; and such too as are accounted virtue by those who place virtue in the outward action. When virtue is clearly seen to consist in the heart's entire consecration to God and the good of being, it must be seen, that the unregenerate are not for one moment in this state.

VIII. THE NATURE OF MORAL DEPRAVITY OR SIN.

1. The Bible gives a formal definition of sin. 1 John 3:4, "Sin is a transgression of the law." This definition is the only one that can possibly be true.

2. The Bible everywhere makes the moral law the only standard of right and wrong. This truth lies everywhere upon the face of the Bible.

3. It holds men responsible for their voluntary actions alone, or more strictly, for their choices alone, and expressly affirms, that, "If there be a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." That is, willing as God directs is accepted as obedience.

4. The Bible always represents sin as something done or committed, or willfully omitted, and never as a part or attribute of soul or body, as consisting in

"the deeds done in the body."

IX. THE PROPER METHOD OF ACCOUNTING FOR MORAL DEPRAVITY.

1. The Bible has given us the history of the introduction of sin into our world; and from the narrative, it is plain, that the first sin consisted in selfishness; it consisted in yielding the will to the impulses of the sensibility, instead of abiding by the law of God. Thus the Bible ascribes the first sin of our race to the influence of temptation.

St. James says that a man is tempted when he is drawn aside of his own lusts, and enticed. That is, his lusts, or the impulses of his sensibility, are his tempters. When he, or his will is overcome of these, he sins.

2. St. Paul and other inspired writers represent sin as consisting in a carnal or fleshly mind, in the minding of the flesh. The representations of Scripture are, that the body is the occasion of sin. In short, the Bible rightly interpreted everywhere assumes and implies, that sin consists in selfishness.

3. Selfishness consists in the supreme and ultimate choice of self-gratification as an end in life, or for its

own sake, over all other interests. Now, as the choice of an end implies and includes the choice of the means, selfishness of course, causes all that outward life and activity that makes up the entire history of sinners.

Chapter III
THE SANCTIONS OF GOD'S LAW

I. WHAT CONSTITUTES THE SANCTIONS OF GOD'S LAW

The sanctions of God's law are the motives to obedience: that which is to be the natural and governmental consequence or result of obedience and of disobedience.

They are remuneratory, that is, they promise reward to obedience. They are vindicatory, that is, they threaten the disobedient with punishment. They are natural, that is, all moral law is that rule of action which is in exact accordance with the nature and relations of moral beings.

Happiness is to some extent naturally connected with, and the necessary consequence of, obedience to moral law. Misery is naturally and necessarily connected with, and results from, disobedience to

moral law, or from acting contrary to the nature and relations of moral beings.

Sanctions are governmental. By governmental sanctions are intended:

(a) The favour of the government as due to obedience, and positive rewards bestowed upon the obedient by the government.

(b) The displeasure of the government toward the disobedient, and direct punishment inflicted by the government as due to disobedience.

All happiness and misery resulting from obedience or disobedience, either natural, or from the favour, or frown, of government, are to be regarded as constituting the sanctions of law.

II. THERE CAN BE NO LAW WITHOUT SANCTIONS.

Precepts without sanctions are only counsel or advice, and not law. Nothing is moral law, but the rule of action which is founded in the nature and relations of moral beings. It is therefore absurd to say, that there should be no natural sanctions to this rule of action. It is the same absurdity as to say, that conformity to the laws of our being would not produce happiness, and that disconformity to the

laws of our being would not produce misery.

What do we mean by acting in conformity to the laws of our being, but that course of conduct in which all the powers of our being will sweetly harmonize, and produce happiness? And what do we mean by disconformity to the laws of our being, but that course of action which creates mutiny among our powers themselves, which produces discord instead of harmony, misery instead of happiness?

III. IN WHAT LIGHT SANCTIONS ARE TO BE REGARDED.

Sanctions are to be regarded as an expression of the benevolent regard of the lawgiver for his subjects; the motives which he exhibits to induce in the subjects the course of conduct that will secure their highest well-being.

IV. THE END TO BE SECURED BY LAW AND THE EXECUTION OF PENAL SANCTIONS.

The ultimate end of all government is blessedness. This is the ultimate end of the precept, and of the sanction attached to it. A state of blessedness can be secured only by the prevention of sin and the

promotion of holiness.

Confidence in the government is the indispensable condition of all virtue. Confidence results from a revelation of the lawgiver to his subjects. Confidence in God results from a revelation of Himself to His creatures.

V. BY WHAT RULE SANCTIONS OUGHT TO BE GRADUATED.

Moral obligation is founded in the intrinsic value of the well-being of God and of the universe, and conditioned upon the perception of its value.

Guilt ought always to be measured by the perceived value of the end in life which moral beings ought to choose. The sanctions of law ought to be graduated by the intrinsic merit and demerit of holiness and sin.

VI. GOD'S LAW HAS SANCTIONS.

That sin, or disobedience to the moral law, is attended with, and results in, misery, is a matter consciousness. That virtue or holiness is attended with, and results in happiness, is also attested by consciousness. Therefore that God's law has natural sanctions, both remuneratory and

vindicatory, is a matter of fact.

That there are governmental added to the natural, must be true, or God, in fact, has no government but that of natural consequences. The Bible expressly, and in every variety of form, teaches that God will reward the righteous and punish the wicked.

VII. WHAT CONSTITUTES THE REMUNERATORY SANCTIONS OF THE LAW OF GOD.

The happiness that is naturally and necessarily connected with, and results from, holiness and obedience. The merited favour, protection, and blessing of God, and all the natural and government rewards of virtue.

VIII. THE PERFECTION AND DURATION OF THE REMUNERATORY SANCTIONS.

The perfection of the natural reward is, and must be, proportioned to the perfection of virtue. The duration of the remuneratory sanction must be equal to the duration of obedience. This cannot possibly be otherwise. If the existence and virtue of man are immortal, his happiness must be endless.

The Bible most unequivocally asserts the immortality; both of the existence and virtue of the

righteous, and also that their happiness shall be endless. The very design and end of government make it necessary that governmental rewards should be as perfect and unending as virtue.

IX. WHAT CONSTITUTES THE VINDICATORY SANCTIONS OF THE LAW OF GOD.

The misery naturally connected with, and resulting from, disobedience to moral law. The natural vindicatory sanction of the law of God is misery, resulting from a violation of man's own nature.

The displeasure of God, the loss of His protection and governmental favour, together with that punishment which it is His duty to inflict upon the disobedient.

X. ENQUIRE INTO THE MEANING OF THE TERM INFINITE.

It literally and properly means not finite, not limited, not bounded, unlimited, boundless. A thing may be infinite in a particular sense, and not in the absolute sense.

XI. INFINITES MAY DIFFER INDEFINITELY IN AMOUNT.

This is the doctrine of Sir Isaac Newton, and of natural and mathematical science. It is a plain matter of fact. For example: suppose that from this point radiate mathematical lines endlessly in every direction. Let each two of these lines make an angel of one degree, and let the points be sufficiently numerous to fill up the while circle.

Thus the whole space is no more than infinite, in the absolute sense of the term, and yet there is, in the sense of unlimited in quantity, an infinite amount of space between every two of these radii.

The same would be true upon the supposition of two parallel mathematical lines of infinite length, no matter how near together. Anything is infinite which is boundless in any sense. The area between any two of the radii of the circle, or of the parallel lines, is not infinite in the sense that it has no bounds in any direction, for it is bounded on its sides. But it is infinite in the sense of its superficial measure or contents.

So, endless happiness or misery may be finite in one sense and infinite in another. They may be infinite in amount, taking into view their endlessness, however small they may be in degree. There is and can be no whole of them.

It should be remarked that practically no creature, nor all creatures together, will either have enjoyed infinite happiness, or endured infinite misery. At any possible period of the future it will be true that they have only enjoyed or suffered a finite amount. At any possible period, an eternity of bliss or misery is, and always will be still before them.

XII. THE RULE BY WHICH DEGREES OF GUILT ARE TO BE ESTIMATED.

Here let it be remembered that moral obligation is founded in the intrinsic value of those interests which moral agents are bound to choose as an end in life, and is conditioned on a knowledge of this end. The degree of obligation is just equal to the apprehended intrinsic value of those interests.

The guilt or refusal to live for these interests is in proportion, or is equal to the amount of the obligation. Consequently, the mind's honest apprehension or judgment of the value of those interests which it refuses to live for, is, and must be, the rule by which the degree of guilt involved in that refusal ought to be measured.

XIII. ALL AND EVERY SIN MUST FROM ITS VERY

NATURE INVOLVE INFINITE GUILT IN THE SENSE OF DESERVING ENDLESS PUNISHMENT.

Sin implies moral obligation. Moral obligation implies moral agency. Moral agency implies the apprehension of the end that moral agents ought to live for.

This end is the highest well-being of God and the universe. The intelligence of every moral agent must affirm this end to be of infinite value, in the sense that its value is unlimited. Every moral agent must be able to affirm, that the intrinsic value of the happiness of God and the universe must be boundless, unlimited, infinite. By this affirmation, or the apprehension that necessitates this affirmation, his guilt ought to be measured, if he refuses to consecrate himself to the promotion of those interests.

XIV. ALL SIN DESERVES ENDLESS PUNISHMENT, YET THE GUILT OF DIFFERENT PERSONS MAY VARY INDEFINITELY, AND PUNISHMENT, ALTHOUGH ENDLESS, MAY VARY, AND OUGHT TO VARY.

The guilt of different persons may vary indefinitely. This also may be true of the same person at

different periods of life. Observe: the degree of guilt depends on the degree of intellectual development on moral subjects, upon the clearness with which the mind apprehends moral relations, especially the intrinsic value of those interests which it ought to choose. These apprehensions vary, as every moral agent is conscious, almost continually.

The obligation to live for an end lies in the intrinsic value of the end. The obligation is greater or less, as the mind's honest estimate of the value of it is greater or less. As light increases, and the mind obtains enlarged conceptions of God, of the universe, of endless happiness or misery, and of all those great truths that cluster around these subjects, its obligation increases in exact proportion to increasing light, and so does the guilt of selfishness.

XV. PENAL INFLICTIONS UNDER THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD MUST BE ENDLESS.

Here the enquiry is, what kind of death is intended, where death is pronounced against the transgressor, as the penalty of the law of God?

The penal sanction of the law of God is endless death, or that state of endless suffering which is the

natural and government result of sin or of spiritual death.

I will notice an objection, in three forms, which is leveled against the justice of endless punishment:

1. Life is so short, that men do not live long enough in this world to commit so great a number of sins as to deserve endless punishment.

This objection is founded in ignorance or disregard of a universal principle of government, viz., that one breach of the precept always incurs the penalty of the law, whatever that penalty is.

The length of time employed in committing a sin, has nothing to do with its blameworthiness or guilt. It is the design that constitutes the moral character of the action. It is the intrinsic desert or guilt of sin, that renders it deserving of endless punishment.

2. A finite creature cannot commit an infinite sin.

This objection takes for granted that man is so diminutive a creature, so much less that the Creator, that he cannot deserve His endless frown. Which would involve the most guilt, for a man to smite his neighbour and his equal, or his lawful sovereign? The fact that man is so infinitely below his Maker, does but enhance the guilt of his rebellion, and

render him all the more worthy of His endless frown.

3. Sin is not an infinite evil, and therefore does not deserve endless punishment.

This objection must mean that sin does not involve infinite guilt. What does all sin in its own nature deserve? They who deny the justice of endless punishment, consider the guilt of sin a mere trifle. They who maintain the justice of endless punishment, consider sin as an evil of immeasurable magnitude, and, in its own nature, deserving of endless punishment.

Sin is selfishness; it consists in preferring self-gratification to the infinite interests of God and of the universe. Every moral agent, by a law of his own reason, necessarily affirms that God is infinite, and that the endless happiness and well-being of God and of the universe, is of infinite value.

Hence it follows, that refusal to will this good is a violation of infinite or unlimited obligation, and, consequently, involves unlimited guilt.

Unless the penal sanctions of the law of God are endless, they are virtually and really no penalty at all. If a man be threatened with punishment for one thousand, or ten thousand, or ten millions, or ten hundred millions of years, after which he is to come

out as a matter of justice, and go to heaven, there is beyond an absolute eternity of happiness.

The tendency of sin to perpetuate and aggravate itself, affords another strong inference, that the sinfulness and misery of the wicked will be eternal.

To deny the justice of eternal punishment is virtually to deny the fact of moral evil. But to deny this is to deny moral obligation, and moral agency. But of both moral obligation and moral agency we are absolutely conscious. Therefore it follows to a demonstration, not only that moral evil does exist, but that it deserves endless punishment.

XVI. EXAMINE THIS QUESTION IN THE LIGHT OF REVELATION.

The Bible expresses the duration of the future punishment of the wicked by the same terms, and, in every way, as forcibly as it expresses the duration of the future happiness of the righteous, and never once represents it otherwise.

I will here introduce, without comment, some passages of Scripture confirming this last remark. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Danl.

12:2

"Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink. And these shall go away into the everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25:41, 41, 46

Chapter IV.
THE ATONEMENT

The English word atonement is synonymous with the Hebrew word for cover. The cover, was the name of the lid or cover of the Ark of the Covenant, and constituted what was called the mercy-seat. The Greek word rendered atonement, means reconciliation to favour, or more strictly, the means or conditions of reconciliation to favour. The term properly means substitution.

An examination of these original words, in the connection in which they stand in the Bible, will show that the atonement is the governmental substitution of the sufferings of Christ for the punishment of sinners. It is a covering of their sins

by His sufferings.

I. SOME ESTABLISHED PRINCIPLES OF GOVERNMENT.

Moral law is not founded in the mere arbitrary will of God or of any other being, but it has its foundation in the nature and relations of moral agents. It is that rule of action, or of willing, which is imposed on them by that law of their own intellect.

There is a distinction between the letter and the spirit of moral law. The letter relates to the outward life or action; the spirit respects the motive or intention from which the act should proceed.

The letter of the law is found in the Ten Commandments, and in other Biblical precepts relating to outward acts. To the letter of the law there may be exceptions, but to the spirit of moral law there can be no exception. For example: the letter of the law prohibits all labour on the Sabbath day, but the spirit of the law often requires labour on the Sabbath.

In establishing a government and promulgating law, the lawgiver is always understood as pledging himself duly to administer the laws in support of public order, and for the promotion of public morals,

to reward the innocent with his favour and protection, and to punish the disobedient with the loss of his protection and favour.

Public justice, in its exercise, consists in the promotion and protection of the public interests, by such legislation and such an administration of the law, as is demanded by the highest good of the public. It implies the execution of the penalties of law where the precept is violated unless something is done that will as effectually secure the public interests. When this is done, public justice demands, that the execution of the penalty shall be dispensed with by extending pardon to the criminal.

It is a fact well established by the experience of all ages and nations, that the exercise of mercy in setting aside the execution of penalties is a matter of extreme delicacy and danger. The influence of law, as might be expected, is found very much to depend upon the certainty felt by the subjects that it will be duly executed. It is found in experience to be true, that the exercise of mercy in every government where no atonement is made, weakens government, by begetting and fostering a hope if impunity in the minds of those who are tempted to violate the law.

Whatever will as fully evince the lawgiver's regard

for his law, his determination to support it, his abhorrence of all violations of its precepts, and withal guard as effectually against the inference, that violators of the precept might expect to escape with impunity, as the execution of the penalty would do, is a full satisfaction of public justice. When these conditions are fulfilled, and the sinner has returned to obedience, public justice not only admits, but absolutely demands, that the penalty shall be set aside by extending pardon to the offender.

The following things must be true under a perfect government: that sin cannot be forgiven merely upon condition of repentance, for this is within the power of the subject, so that he might then be sure of impunity; nor can it be forgiven upon a condition that shall be repeated, for this would encourage the hope of impunity.

II. THE FACT OF ATONEMENT

This is purely a doctrine of revelation. The Old and New Testaments attest, most unequivocally, the necessity of an atonement. If sinners were to be saved at all, it must be through an atonement.

"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men

whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." Gal. 2:16. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin." Heb. 9:22

Some passages that establish the fact of the vicarious death of Christ, and redemption through His blood: "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." Isa. 53:5 "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt. 20:23 "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. To declare, I say, at this time, His righteousness; that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:24 "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John 4:9-10

III. THE DESIGN OF THE ATONEMENT

Christ's obedience to the moral law as a covenant of works, did not constitute the atonement. Had He obeyed for us, He need not certainly both have fulfilled the law for us, as our substitute, and at the same time have suffered as a substitute, in submitting to the penalty of the law. If He obeyed the law as our substitute, then why should our own return to personal obedience be insisted upon as an indispensable condition to our salvation?

The atonement was intended as a satisfaction of public justice. The moral law did not originate in God's will, but is founded in His self-existence and immutable nature. He cannot therefore, set aside the execution of the penalty when the precept has been violated, without something being done that shall meet the demands of the true spirit of the law. "To declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3:26

Whatever can as effectually reveal God, make known His hatred to sin, His love of order, His determination to support His government, and to promote the holiness and happiness of His creatures, as the execution of the penalty of His law

would do, is a full satisfaction of public justice.

Atonement is, therefore, a part, and a most influential part, of moral government. The execution of law still holds a place, and makes up an indispensable part of the great circle of motives essential to the perfection of moral government. Fallen angels, and the finally impenitent of this world, will receive the full execution of the penalty of the divine law.

An atonement was needed to inspire confidence in the offers and promises of pardon. Whenever the soul can apprehend the reality of the atonement, it can then believe every offer and promise, as the very thing to be expected from a Being who could give His Son to die for enemies.

An atonement was needed as the great and only means of sanctifying sinners. The law was calculated, when once its penalty was incurred, to shut the sinner up in a dungeon, and only to develop more and more his depravity. Nothing could subdue his sin, and cause him to love, but the manifestation to him of disinterested benevolence. The atonement is just the thing to meet this necessity, and subdue rebellion. An atonement was needed, not to render God merciful, but to reconcile pardon with a due administration of justice.

God's great and disinterested love to sinners themselves was a prime reason for the atonement. "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

His love to the universe at large must have been another reason, inasmuch as it was impossible that the atonement should not exert an amazing influence over moral beings, in whatever world they might exist.

Another reason for preferring the atonement to the punishment of sinners must have been, that, sin had afforded an opportunity for the highest manifestation of virtue in God: the manifestation of forbearance, mercy, self-denial, and suffering for enemies that were within His own power. It is impossible to conceive of a higher order of virtue than are exhibited in the atonement of Christ. It was vastly desirable that God should take advantage of such an opportunity to exhibit His true character, and show to the universe what was in His heart.

The atonement would present to creatures the highest possible motives to virtue. Example is the highest moral influence that can be exerted. If the benevolence manifested in the atonement does not

subdue the selfishness of sinners, their case is hopeless.

The atonement would afford God an opportunity always to gratify His love in His kindness to sinners, in using means for their salvation, in forgiving and saving them when they repent, without the danger of its being inferred in the universe, that He had not a sufficient abhorrence for their sin.

The final punishment of the wicked will be more impressive in the light of the infinite love, manifest in the atonement. The atonement is the highest testimony that God can bear against selfishness. It is the testimony of His own example. The atonement so reveals all the attributes of God, as to complete the whole circle of motives needed to influence the minds of moral beings.

IV. THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT

We must enquire into the governmental value of the atonement. It is valuable only as it tends to promote the glory of God, and the virtue and happiness of the universe. Its value also consists in its adaptedness to prevent further rebellion against God in every part of the universe. The atonement exhibits God in such a light, as must greatly

strengthen the confidence of holy beings in His character and government.

The atonement may be viewed in either of two points of light. Christ my be considered as the Law-giver attesting His sincerity, love of holiness, hatred of sin, approbation of the law, and compassion for His subjects, by laying down His life as their substitute.

Or Christ may be considered as the Son of the Supreme Ruler: and then we have the spectacle of a sovereign, giving His only-begotten and well-beloved Son, His greatest treasure, to die a shameful and agonizing death, in testimony of His great compassion for His rebellious subjects, and of His high regard for public justice. This is the highest possible moral influence. It is properly moral omnipotence; that is, the influence of the atonement, when apprehended by the mind, will accomplish whatever is within the compass of moral power to effect. All mankind can be pardoned, if they are rightly affected and brought to repentance by it, as well as any part of mankind.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29 "Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time."

1 Tim. 2:6 "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:2

Sinners are represented as having no excuse for being lost and for not being saved by Christ. "And He saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding-garment? And he was speechless." Matt. 22:12

REMARKS

Faith in the atonement of Christ rolls a mountain weight of crushing and melting considerations upon the heart of the sinner. Thus the blood of Christ, when apprehended and believed in, cleanses from all sin. From this may be seen the indispensable necessity of faith in the atonement.

The atonement shows how solid a foundation the saints have for an eternal repose and confidence in God. It greatly glorifies God; indeed it does so, far above all His other works and ways.

It opens the channels of God's benevolence to state-criminals. It has united God in a new and peculiar way to human nature. It has opened a way of access to God never opened to any creatures before. It restores the life of God to the soul, by

restoring to man the influences of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter V.
TRUE AND FALSE REPENTANCE

For godly sorrow worketh repentance not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. II Cor. 7:10

In this verse which I have taken as my text, the Apostle Paul speaks of two kinds of sorrow for sin, one working repentance unto salvation, the other working death. It is high time professors of religion were taught to discriminate much more than they do in regard to the nature and character of various religious exercises. Were it so, the Church would not be so overrun with false and unprofitable professors of religion. The cause is doubtless a want of discriminating instruction respecting the foundation of religion, and especially respecting true and false repentance.

I. WHAT IS TRUE REPENTANCE

It involves a change of opinion respecting the nature of sin, and this change of opinion followed by a

corresponding change of feeling towards sin. Feeling is the result of thought. And when this change of opinion is such as to produce a corresponding change of feeling, if the opinion is right and the feeling corresponds this is true repentance. It must be right opinion as God holds respecting sin. Godly sorrow, such as God requires, must spring from such views of sin as God holds.

1. There must be a change of opinion in regard to sin.

(a) A change in opinion in regard to the nature of sin. To one who truly repents, sin looks a very different thing from what it does to him who has not repented. Instead of looking like a thing that is desirable or fascinating, it looks the very opposite, most odious and detestable, and he is astonished at himself, that he ever could have desired such a thing.

Impenitent sinners may look at sin and see that it will ruin them, because God will punish them for it; but, after all, it appears in itself desirable; they love it; they roll it under their tongue. If it could end in happiness, they never would think of abandoning it. But to the other it is different; he looks back upon it

and exclaims, "How hateful, how detestable, how worthy of hell, such and such a thing was in me!"

(b) A change of opinion of the character of sin as respects its relation to God. Sinners do not see why God threatens sin with such terrible punishment. But when they are strongly convicted, many a sinner sees its relation to God to be such that it deserves eternal death, but his heart does not go with his opinions. This is the case with the devils and wicked spirits in hell. Mark then! -- a change of opinion is indispensable to true repentance, and always precedes it. There may be a change of opinion without repentance, but no genuine repentance without a change of opinion.

(c) A change of opinion in regard to the tendencies of sin. Before, the sinner thinks it utterly incredible that sin should have such tendencies as to deserve everlasting death. He may be fully changed, however, as to his opinion on this point without true repentance, but it is impossible a man should truly repent without a change of opinion. He sees sin, in its tendency, as ruinous to himself and everybody else, soul, and body, for time and eternity, and at variance with all that is lovely and happy in the universe. He sees that sin is calculated in its tendencies to injure himself and everybody else,

and that there is no remedy but universal abstinence.

(d) A change of opinion in regard to the desert of sin. The word rendered repentance implies a change in the state of the mind including all this. The careless sinner is almost devoid of right ideas. Suppose he admits in theory that sin deserves eternal death, he does not believe it. But the truly awakened and convicted sinner has no more doubt of this than he has of the existence of God. He sees clearly that sin must deserve everlasting punishment from God. He knows that this is a simple matter of fact.

2. In true repentance there must be a corresponding change of feeling. The change of feeling respects sin in all these particulars, its nature, its relations, its tendencies, and its deserts.

(a) The individual who truly repents, not only sees sin to be detestable and vile, and worthy of abhorrence, but he really abhors it, and hates it in his heart.

(b) In relation to God he feels towards sin as it really is. And here is the source of those gushings of sorrow in which Christians sometimes break out, when contemplating sin.

(c) Then as to the tendencies of sin, the individual who truly repents feels it as it is. When he views sin in its tendencies, it awakens a vehement desire to stop it, and to save people from their sins, and roll back the tide of death. It sets his heart on fire, and he goes to praying, and labouring, and pulling sinners out of the fire with all his might, to save them from the awful tendencies of sin. When the Christian sets his mind on this, he will bestir himself to make people give up their sins.

(d) He feels right as to the desert of sin. He has not only an intellectual conviction that sin deserves everlasting punishment, but he feels that it would be so right and so reasonable, and so just, for God to condemn him to eternal death, that so far from finding fault with the sentence of the law that condemns him, he thinks it the wonder of heaven, a wonder of wonders, if God can forgive him. He is full of adoring wonder that this whole guilty world has not long since been hurled to endless burnings. And when he thinks of such sinners being saved, he feels a sense of gratitude that he never knew anything of until he was a Christian.

II. THE EFFECT OF GENUINE REPENTANCE

1. If your repentance is genuine, there is in your

mind a conscious change of views and feeling towards sin. Of this you will be just as conscious as you ever were of a change of views, and feelings on any other subject. Now can you say this?

2. Where repentance is genuine, the disposition to repeat sin is gone. If you have truly repented you do not love sin; you do not now abstain from it through fear, and to avoid punishment, but because you hate it.

3. Repentance, when true and genuine, leads to confession and restitution. If you have cheated anyone, and do not restore what you have taken unjustly; or if you have injured anyone, and do not set about rectifying the wrong you have done, so far as you are able, you have not truly repented.

4. True repentance is a permanent change of character and conduct. It is repentance unto salvation, "not to be repented of." In other words, repentance so thorough, that there is no going back. The love of sin is truly abandoned.

III. FALSE REPENTANCE

False repentance is said to be worldly, "the sorrow of the world." It is sorrow for sin arising from worldly considerations and motives.

1. It is not founded on such a change of opinion as I have specified to belong to true repentance. A person may see the evil consequences of sin in a worldly point of view, and it may fill him with consternation. He may see that it will greatly affect his character, or endanger his life; that if some of his concealed conduct should be found out he would be disgraced. It is very common for persons to have this worldly sorrow for sin.

2. False repentance is founded in selfishness. It may extend to fear--deep and dreadful fear--of the wrath of God and the pains of hell, and yet be purely selfish, and all the while there may be no such thing as a hearty abhorrence of sin, and no feeling of the heart going out after the convictions of the understanding, in regard to the infinite evil of sin.

IV. HOW THIS FALSE REPENTANCE MAY BE KNOWN.

1. It leaves the feelings unchanged. The feelings as to the nature of sin are not so changed, but that the individual still feels a desire for sin. It works death. It leads to hypocritical concealment. Instead of that ingenious, openhearted breaking forth of the sensibility, and frankness, you see a palavering, smooth-tongued, half-hearted mincing out of

something that is intended to answer the purpose of confession and yet to confess nothing.

2. False repentance produces only a partial reformation of conduct. The heart is not changed. Observe that young convert. If he is deceived, you will find that there is only a partial change in his conduct.

3. Ordinarily, the reformation produced by false sorrow for sin is temporary, even in those things which are reformed. The individual is continually relapsing into his old sins. The woman that loved dress, loves it still; and gradually returns to her ribands and gew-gaws. The man who loved money, loves it yet, and soon slides back into his old ways.

Go through all the departments of society, and if you will find people with thorough conversions, you will find that their most besetting sins before conversion are farthest from them now. The real convert is least likely to fall into his old besetting sin, because he abhors it most.

4. It is a forced reformation. The reformation of one who has true repentance is from the heart; he has no longer a disposition to sin. He experiences that the Savior's yoke is easy and His burden is light.

5. This spurious repentance leads to self-

righteousness. The individual may know that Jesus Christ is the only Savior of sinners, and may profess to believe on Him, and to rely on Him alone for salvation, but after all, he is actually placing ten times more reliance on his reformation than on Jesus Christ for his salvation. It leads to false security.

REMARKS

We see why sinners under conviction feel as if it were a great cross to become Christians. They think it a great trail to give up their ungodly companions, and to give up their sins. Whereas, if they had true repentance, they would not think it any cross to give up their sins. Sinners do not see that when their young friends become Christians, they feel an abhorrence for balls and parties, and sinful amusements and follies, that the love for these things is crucified.

I once knew a young lady who was converted to God. She used to be very fond of dress, and the dancing school, and balls. After she was converted, her father would force her to go to the dancing school. He used to go along with her, and force her to stand up and dance. She would go there and weep, and sometimes when she was standing up on

the floor to dance, her feelings of abhorrence and sorrow would so come over her, that she would turn away and burst into tears.

See why backsliders are so miserable. Perhaps you will infer that I suppose all true Christians are perfect, from what I have said about the disposition to sin being broken up and changed. But this does not follow. There is a radical difference between a backslidden Christian and a hypocrite who has gone back from his profession.

Chapter VI
FAITH AND UNBELIEF

The term, faith, has diverse significations, and is used in the Bible sometimes to designate a state of the intellect, in which case it means an undoubting persuasion, a firm conviction. This however is not its evangelical sense. Evangelical faith cannot be a phenomenon of the intellect, for the plain reason, that when used in an evangelical sense, it is always regarded as a virtue.

Faith is a condition of salvation. It is something which we are commanded to do upon the pain of eternal death. But if it be something to be done, a

solemn duty, it cannot be a merely passive state, a mere intellectual conviction. The Bible distinguishes between intellectual and saving faith. There is a faith of devils, and a faith of saints.

One produces good works or a holy life; the other is unproductive. This shows that one is a phenomenon of the intellect merely, and does not control the conduct. The other must be a phenomenon of the will, because it manifests itself in the outward life. Evangelical faith, then, is not a conviction. It is not a feeling of any kind; that is, it does not belong to, and is not a phenomenon of the sensibility.

Saving faith is represented in the Bible as an active and most efficient state of mind. It works, and "works by love." It produces "the obedience of faith." Christians are said to be sanctified by the faith that is in Christ. Indeed the Bible, in a great variety of instances and ways, represents faith in God and in Christ as a cardinal form of virtue, and as the main-spring of an outwardly holy life. Hence it cannot consist in any involuntary state or exercise of mind whatever.

I. WHAT EVANGELICAL FAITH IS.

Since the Bible uniformly represents saving or

evangelical faith as a virtue, we know that it must be a phenomenon of the will. It is an efficient state of mind, and therefore it must consist in the embracing of the truth by the heart or will. It is the will's closing in with the truths of the Gospel. It is the soul's act of yielding itself up, or committing itself to the truths of the evangelical system. It is a trusting in Christ, a committing the soul and the whole being to Him, in His various offices and relations to men. It is a confiding in Him, and in what is revealed of Him, in His Word and providence and by His Spirit.

The same word that is so often translated, faith, in the New Testament, is also rendered, "commit," as in John 2:24, "But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men." Luke 16:11, "Who will commit to your trust the true riches?" Faith is the act of confiding in God and in Christ, as revealed in the Bible and in reason. It is a receiving of the testimony of God concerning Himself, and concerning all the things of which He has spoken. It is a receiving of Christ for just what He is represented to be in His Gospel, and an unqualified surrender of the will, and of the whole being to Him.

III. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN EVANGELICAL FAITH.

1. It implies an intellectual perception of the things,

facts, and truths believed. No one can believe that which he does not understand.

2. Evangelical faith implies the appropriation of the truths of the Gospel to ourselves. It implies an acceptance of Christ as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. The soul that truly believes in Christ, believes that He tasted death for every man, and of course for it. It apprehends Christ as the Saviour of the world, as offered to all, and embraces and receives Him for itself. It appropriates His atonement, and His resurrection and His intercession, and His promises to itself.

Christ is thus presented in the Gospel not only as the Saviour of the world, but also to the individual acceptance of men. He saves the world no further than He saves individuals. Evangelical faith implies a personal acceptance and appropriation of Christ to meet the necessities of the individual soul.

3. Faith is a state of committal to Christ, and of course it implies that the soul will be unreseveredly yielded up to Him, in all His relations to it, so far and so fast as these are apprehended by the intellect.

4. Evangelical faith implies an evangelical life. This would not be true if faith were merely an intellectual state or exercise. But since, as we have seen, faith

is of the heart, since it consists in the committal of the will to Christ, it follows, by a law of necessity, that the life will correspond with faith. Let this be kept in perpetual remembrance.

5. Evangelical faith implies repentance towards God, that is, a turning from sin to God.

6. Evangelical faith implies a renunciation of self-righteousness. It is impossible for one to embrace Christ as the Saviour of the soul, any further than he renounces all hope or expectation of being saved by his own works, or righteousness.

7. Of course it implies peace of mind. In Christ the soul finds its full and present salvation. It has found its resting-place in Christ, and rests in profound peace under the shadow of the Almighty.

8. It implies hope, as soon as the believing soul considers what is conveyed by the Gospel, that is, a hope of eternal life in and through Christ.

9. It implies joy in God and in Christ. St. Peter speaks of joy as the unfailing accompaniment of faith, as resulting from it.

10. Present evangelical faith implies a state of present sinlessness. Observe: faith is the yielding and committal of the whole will, and of the whole

being to Christ. This, and nothing short of this, is evangelical faith. But this comprehends and implies the whole of present, true obedience to Christ. This is the reason why faith is spoken of as the condition, and as it were, the only condition, of salvation. It really implies all virtue.

When contemplated as an attribute of love, it is only a branch of sanctification. When contemplated in the wider sense of universal conformity of will to the will of God, it is then synonymous with entire present sanctification. Contemplated in either light, its existence in the heart must be inconsistent with present sin there. Faith is an attitude of the will, and is wholly incompatible with present rebellion of will against Christ. This must be true, or what is faith?

III. WHAT UNBELIEF IS NOT.

1. It is not ignorance. Ignorance is a blank; it is the negation or absence of knowledge. This certainly cannot be the unbelief everywhere represented in the Bible as a heinous sin. Ignorance may be a consequence of unbelief, but it cannot be identical with it.

2. Unbelief is not the negation or absence of faith.

This were a mere nothing--a nonentity. But a mere nothing is not that abominable thing which the Scriptures represent as a great and damning sin.

3. It cannot be intellectual skepticism. This state of the intellect may result from the state of mind properly denominated unbelief, but it cannot be identical with it.

4. It cannot consist in feelings or emotions of incredulity, doubt, or opposition to truth. In other words, unbelief as a sin, cannot be a phenomenon of the sensibility.

In short, the unbelief that is so sorely denounced in the Bible as an aggravated abomination, cannot consist in any involuntary state of mind whatever.

IV. WHAT UNBELIEF IS.

The term as used in the Bible, in those passages that represent it as a sin, must designate a phenomenon of the will. It must be a voluntary state of mind. It must be the opposite of evangelical faith. Faith is the will's reception and unbelief is the will's rejection, of truth. Faith is the soul's confiding in truth and in the God of truth. Unbelief is the soul's withholding confidence from truth and the God of truth. It is the heart's rejection of evidence, and

refusal to be influenced by it. It is the will in the attitude of opposition to truth perceived, or evidence presented.

Intellectual skepticism or unbelief, where light is proffered, always implies the unbelief of the will or heart. For if the mind knows, or supposes, that light may be had on any question of duty, and does not make honest efforts to obtain it, this can only be accounted for by ascribing it to the will's reluctance to know the path of duty. In this case light is rejected. This is the sin of unbelief.

All infidelity is unbelief in this sense, and infidels are so, not for want of light, but, in general, they have taken much pains to shut their eyes against it. Unbelief must be a voluntary state of attitude of the will, as distinguished from a mere volition, or executive act of the will. Volition may, and often does, give forth, through words and deeds, expressions and manifestations of unbelief. But the volition is only a result of unbelief, and is not identical with it. Unbelief is a deeper and more efficient and more permanent state of mind than mere volition. It is the will in its profoundest opposition to the truth and will of God.

V. WHAT IS IMPLIED IN UNBELIEF.

1. Unbelief implies light, or the perception of truth. For example: the heathen who have never heard the Gospel are not properly guilty of unbelief in not embracing it. They are indeed guilty of unbelief in rejecting the light of nature.

2. It implies obstinate selfishness. Selfishness is a spirit of self-seeking. It consists in the will's committing itself to self-gratification or self-indulgence. Now unbelief is only selfishness contemplated in its relation to the truth of God. It is only the resistance which the will makes to those truths that are opposed to selfishness.

3. Where any one attribute of selfishness is, there must be the presence of every other attribute, either in a developed state or waiting for the occasion of its development. The nature of unbelief proves that the unbelieving heart is not only void of all good, but that every form of sin is there.

4. The nature of unbelief implies that its degree depends on the degree of light enjoyed. It consists in the rejection of truth perceived. Its degree or greatness must depend upon the degree of light rejected.

5. The same must be true of the guilt of unbelief.

6. It implies mortal enmity against God. Unbelief rejects the truth and authority of God, and is, of course, and of necessity, opposed to the very existence of the God of truth. It would annihilate truth and the God of truth, were it possible. We have an instance and an illustration of this in the rejection and the murder of Jesus Christ. What was this but unbelief? This is the nature of unbelief in all circumstances.

All sinners who hear and reject the Gospel, reject Christ; and were Christ personally present to insist upon their reception of Him, and to urge His demands, remaining unbelieving, they would of course, and of necessity, sooner murder Him than receive Him. So that every rejecter of the Gospel is guilty of the blood and murder of Christ.

VI. THE GUILT AND ILL-DESERT OF UNBELIEF.

The guilt of sin is conditionated upon, and graduated by, the light under which it is committed. The amount of light is the measure of guilt in every case. This is true of all sin.

The guilt of unbelief under the light of the Gospel must be indefinitely greater, than when merely the light of nature is rejected. The guilt of unbelief in

cases where special divine illumination has been enjoyed, must be vastly and incalculably greater, than where the mere light of the Gospel has been enjoyed without a special enlightening of the Holy Spirit. Those things that are implied in unbelief show that it must be one of the most provoking abominations to God in the universe.

VII. NATURAL AND GOVERNMENTAL CONSEQUENCES OF BOTH FAITH AND UNBELIEF.

1. One of the natural consequences of faith is peace of conscience. When the will receives the truth, and yields itself up to conformity with it, the conscience is satisfied with its present attitude, and the man becomes at peace with himself. The soul is then in a state to really respect itself, and can, as it were, behold its own face without a blush.

2. Self-condemnation is one of the natural consequences of unbelief. Such are the constitution and laws of mind, that it is naturally impossible for the mind to justify the heart's rejection of truth. The conscience necessarily condemns such rejection.

3. Faith will develop every form of virtue in the heart and life, as their occasion shall arise. It consists in

the committing of the will to truth and to the God of truth, and as different occasions arise, faith will secure conformity to all truth on all subjects, and then every modification of virtue will exist in the heart, and appear in the life, as circumstances in the providence of God shall develop them.

4. Unbelief may be expected to develop resistance to all truth on all subjects that conflict with selfishness; and hence nothing but selfishness in some form can restrain its appearing in any other and every other form possible. For example, avarice may restrain amativeness, intemperance, and many other forms of selfishness.

5. Faith naturally and necessarily results in all those lovely and delightful emotions and states of feeling, of which they are conscious whose hearts have embraced Christ. I mean all those emotions that are naturally connected with the action of the will, and naturally result from believing the blessed truths of the Gospel.

6. Unbelief naturally results in those emotions of remorse, regret, pain, and agony which are the frequent experience of the unbeliever.

7. Faith lets God into the soul to dwell and reign there. Faith receives, not only the atonement and

mediatorial work of Christ as a redeemer from punishment, but it also receives Christ as king to set up His throne, and reign in the heart. Faith secures to the soul communion with God.

Chapter VII
JUSTIFICATION

I. WHAT IS GOSPEL JUSTIFICATION.

It consists, not in the law pronouncing the sinner just, but in his being ultimately governmentally treated as if he were just, that is, it consists in a governmental decree of pardon or amnesty -- in arresting or setting aside the execution of the incurred penalty of law -- in pardoning and restoring to favour those who have sinned, and those whom the law had pronounced guilty, and upon whom it had passed sentence of eternal death, and rewarding them as if they had been righteous. It is an act either of the lawmaking or executive department of government, and is an act entirely aside from and contrary to, the forensic or judicial power or department of government. It is a practical, not a literal, pronouncing of him just. In proof of this position, I remark: --

1. That this is most unequivocally taught in the Old Testament. The whole system of sacrifices taught the doctrine of pardon upon conditions of atonement, repentance, and faith. St. Paul informs us what justification was in the sense in which the Old Testament saints understood it. Rom. 4:6-7, "Even also as David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and who sins are covered." This shows what both David and Paul understood by justification, to wit, the pardon and acceptance of the penitent sinner.

2. The New Testament fully justifies and establishes this view of the subject.

3. Sinners cannot possibly be justified in any other sense.

II. CONDITIONS OF JUSTIFICATION.

In this discussion I use the term, condition, in the sense of an indispensable condition, a "not without which." A condition as distinct from the ground of justification, is anything without which sinners cannot be justified, which, nevertheless, is not the procuring cause or fundamental reason of their

justification.

The vicarious sufferings or atonement of Christ is a condition of justification, or of the pardon and acceptance of penitent sinners. It has been common to represent the atonement and work of Christ as the ground, as distinct from and opposed to a condition of justification. In treating this subject, I find it important to distinguish between the ground and conditions of justification and to regard the atonement and work of Christ, not as the ground, but only as a condition of Gospel justification.

By the ground, I mean the moving, procuring cause; that in which the plan of redemption originated as its source, and which was the fundamental reason or ground of the whole movement. This was the benevolence and, merciful disposition of the whole Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This love made the atonement, but the atonement did not beget this love. The Godhead desired to save sinners, but could not safely do so without danger to the universe unless something were done to satisfy public, not retributive, justice. The atonement was resorted to as a means of reconciling forgiveness with the wholesome administration of justice.

Failing to make this distinction, and representing the atonement as the ground of the sinner's justification

has been a sad occasion of stumbling to many. Indeed the whole questions of the nature, design, extent, and bearings of the atonement, turn upon, and are involved in, this distinction. Some represent the atonement as demanded by the inexorable wrath of the Father, leaving the impression that Christ was more merciful, and more the friend of sinners than the Father.

Others again, assuming that the atonement was the ground of justification in the sense of the literal payment of the debt of sinners, and that the Scriptures represent the atonement as made for all men, have very consistently become Universalists.

That Christ's sufferings, and especially His death, were vicarious, has been abundantly shown when treating the subject of atonement. Although Christ owed perfect obedience to the moral law for Himself, yet He owed no suffering to the law. He could therefore suffer for us. That is, He could, to answer governmental purposes, substitute His death for the infliction of the penalty of the law on us. The doctrine of substitution, in the sense just named, appears everywhere in both Testaments. For example:

Lev. 17:11 "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an

atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Isa. 53:5-6 "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Matt. 26:28 "For this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

1 Pet. 3:16 "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God."

2. Repentance is also a condition of our justification. It must be certain that the government of God cannot pardon sin without repentance. This is as truly a doctrine of natural as of revealed religion. Until the sinner breaks off from sin by repentance or turning to God, he cannot be justified in any sense.

3. Faith in Christ is, in the same sense, another condition of justification. It should never be forgotten, that the faith that is the condition of justification is the faith that works by love. It is the

faith through and by which Christ sanctifies the soul.

John 1:12 "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Gal. 2:16 "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

4. Present sanctification, in the sense of present full consecration to God, is another condition of justification. Some theologians have made justification a condition of sanctification, instead of making sanctification a condition of justification. This is a mistake.

To sanctify is to set apart, to consecrate to a particular use. To sanctify anything to God is to set it apart to His service, to consecrate it to Him. To sanctify one's self, is voluntarily to set one's self apart, to consecrate one's self to God. It is a state of

consecration to Him. This is present obedience to the moral law. It is the whole of present duty, and is implied in repentance, faith, and regeneration.

The word, sanctification, is sometimes used to express a permanent state of obedience to God. In this sense it is not a condition of present justification, or of pardon and acceptance. But it is a condition of continued and permanent acceptance with God. It certainly cannot be true that God accepts and justifies the sinner in his sins. I may safely challenge the world for either reason or Scripture to support the doctrine of justification in sin, in any degree of present rebellion against God.

The Bible everywhere represents justified persons as sanctified, and always expressly, or impliedly, conditionates justification upon sanctification, in the sense of present obedience to God.

1 Cor. 6:11 "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

Rom. 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

By sanctification being a condition of justification,

the following things are intended:

(a) That present, full, and entire consecration of heart and life to God and His service, is an unalterable condition of present pardon of past sin, and of present acceptance with God.

(b) That the penitent soul remains justified no longer than this full-hearted consecration continues. If he falls from his first love into the spirit of self-pleasing, he falls again into bondage to sin and to the law, is condemned, and must repent and do his "first works," must return to Christ, and renew his faith and love, as a condition of his salvation.

5. Perseverance in faith and obedience, or in consecration to God, is also an unalterable condition of justification or of pardon and acceptance with God. By this language in this connection, you will of course understand me to mean, that perseverance in faith and obedience is a condition, not of present, but of final or ultimate acceptance and salvation.

I have tried to understand the subject of justification as it is taught in the Bible, without going into laboured speculations or theological technicalities. If I have succeeded in understanding it, the following is a succinct and true account of the matter: --

The Godhead, in the exercise of His adorable love and compassion, sought the salvation of sinners through and by the means of the mediatorial death and work of Christ. This death and work of Christ were resorted to, not to create, but, as a result of the merciful disposition of God, and as a means of securing the universe against a misapprehension of the character and design of God in forgiving and saving sinners. To Christ, as Mediator between the Godhead and man, the work of justifying and saving sinners is committed. He is made unto sinners, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." In consideration of Christ having by His death for sinners secured the subjects of the divine government against a misconception of His character and designs, God does, upon the further conditions of repentance and faith, that imply a renunciation of their rebellion and a return to obedience to His laws, freely pardon past sins, and restore the penitent and believing sinner to favour, as if he had not sinned, while he remains penitent and believing, subject however to condemnation and eternal death, unless he holds the beginning of his confidence steadfast unto the end.

III. THE FOUNDATION OF THE JUSTIFICATION

OF PENITENT BELIEVERS IN CHRIST.

1. Our own works or obedience to the law or to the Gospel, are not the ground or foundation of our justification. That is, neither our faith, nor repentance, nor love, nor life, nor anything done by us or wrought in us, is the ground of our justification. These are conditions of our justification, in the sense of a "not without which," but not the ground of it. None of these things must be omitted on pain of eternal damnation. Nor must they be put in the place of Christ upon the same penalty.

2. Neither is the atonement, nor anything in the mediatorial work of Christ, the foundation of our justification, in the sense of the source, moving, or procuring cause. This, that is the ground of our justification, lies deep in the heart of infinite love. We owe all to that merciful disposition that performed the mediatorial work, and died the accursed death to supply an indispensable condition of our justification and salvation.

3. Nor is the work of the Holy Spirit in converting and sanctifying the soul, the foundation of our justification. This is only a condition or means of bringing it about.

4. But the disinterested and infinite love of God, the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit, is the true and

only foundation of the justification and salvation of sinners. God is love, that is, He is infinitely benevolent. All He does, or says, or suffers, permits or omits, is for one and the same ultimate reason, namely, to promote the highest good of universal being.

5. Christ, the second person in the glorious Trinity, is represented in Scripture, as taking so prominent a part in this work, that the number of offices and relations which He sustains to God and man in it are truly wonderful. For example, he is represented as being: King, Judge, Mediator, Advocate, Redeemer, Surety, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Redemption, Prophet, Priest, Passover, or Lamb of God. The Bread and Water of Life, True God, our Life, As dying for our sin. The Resurrection, The Good Shepherd.

Chapter VIII
LOVE IS THE WHOLE OF RELIGION

The two principle forms of love, as far as religion is concerned, are benevolence and complacency. Benevolence is an act of the will. It is willing good, or a desire to promote the happiness of its object.

Complacency is esteem or approbation of the character of its object. Benevolence should be exercised towards all beings, regardless of their moral character. Complacency is due only to the good and holy.

I. THE NATURE OF HOLY LOVE

1. Love may exist either as an affection or as an emotion. When love is an affection, it is voluntary, or consists in an act of the will. The virtue of love is mostly when it is in the form of an affection. When it is an emotion it is involuntary; feelings or emotions are involuntary. They are not directly dependent on the will, or controlled by a direct act of will. The happiness of love is mostly when it is in the form of an emotion. If the affection of love be very strong, it produces a high degree of happiness, but the emotion of holy love is happiness itself.

No man can exercise the emotion of love by merely willing it. And the emotion may often exist in spite of the will. Individuals often feel emotions rising in their minds which they know to be improper, and try by direct effort of will to banish them from their minds; finding that impossible they conclude that they have no control over these emotions.

But they may always be controlled by the will in an indirect way. The mind can bring up any class of emotion it chooses, by directing the attention sufficiently to the proper object. They will always be certain to rise in proportion as the attention is fixed.

2. Ordinarily, the emotion of love towards God is experienced when we exercise love toward Him in the form of affection. But this is not always the case. We may exercise good will towards any object, and yet at times feel no sensible emotions of love. It is not certain that even the Lord Jesus Christ exercised love towards God, in the form of emotion, at all times.

A husband and father may be engaged in labouring for the benefit of his family, and his very life controlled by affection for them, while his thoughts are not so engaged upon them as to make him feel any sensible emotions of love to them at the time.

3. Love to God naturally implies love to our neighbor. "Owe no man anything but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt

love they neighbour as thyself." The love of complacency towards holy beings naturally implies love to God, as a being of infinite holiness.

II. LOVE IS THE WHOLE OF RELIGION

1. All that is required of man by God consists in love, in various modifications and results. Love is the sum total of all. The Scriptures fully teach that love is the sum total of all requirements, both of the law and the Gospel. Our Saviour declares that the great command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself," is the sum total of the Law and the Prophets, or implies or includes all that the whole Scriptures, the Law and the Gospel, require.

2. God is love, and to love is to be like God, and to be perfect in love is to be perfect as God is perfect. All God's moral attributes consist in love, acting under certain circumstances and for certain ends. God's justice in punishing the wicked, His anger at sin, and the like, are only exercises of His love to the general happiness of His kingdom.

So it is in man. All that is good in man is some modification of love. Hatred to sin, is only love to virtue acting itself out in opposing whatever is

opposed to virtue. So true faith implies and includes love. The faith that belongs to religion is an affectionate confidence in God.

III. SOME THINGS THAT ARE NOT ESSENTIAL TO PERFECT LOVE

1. The highest degree of emotion is not essential to perfect love. The Lord Jesus Christ very seldom had the highest degree of emotion, yet He always had perfect love.

2. Perfect love does not exclude the idea of increase in love or growth in grace. The growth of mind in knowledge to all eternity, implies growth in love to all eternity.

3. It is not essential to perfect love, that love should always be exercised towards all individuals alike. We cannot think of all individuals at once.

4. It is not essential to perfect love, that there should be the same degree of the spirit of prayer for every individual, or for the same individual at all times. The spirit of prayer is not always essential to pure and perfect love. You may love any individual with a very strong degree of love, and yet not have the spirit of prayer for that individual. That is, the Spirit of God may not lead you to pray for the salvation of

that individual. The spirit of prayer depends on the influences of the Holy Ghost leading the mind to pray according to the will of God.

5. Perfect love is not inconsistent with those feelings of languor or constitutional debility, which are the necessary consequences of exhaustion or ill health. The Lord Jesus felt this weariness and exhaustion.

IV. WHAT IS ESSENTIAL TO PERFECT LOVE

1. It implies that there is nothing in the mind inconsistent with love. No hatred, malice, wrath, envy, or any other malignant emotions that are inconsistent with pure and perfect love.

2. That there is nothing in the life inconsistent with love. All the actions, words, thoughts, continually under the entire and perfect control of love.

3. That the love to God is supreme, and so entirely above all other objects, that nothing else is loved in comparison with God.

4. That love to God is disinterested; that God is loved for what He is, not for His relation to us, but for the excellence of His character.

5. That love to our neighbour should be equal. His interests and happiness should be regarded by us

of equal value with our own, and he and his interests are to be treated accordingly by us.

V. SOME OF THE EFFECTS OF PERFECT LOVE

1. Self-denial for the sake of promoting the interests of God's kingdom and the salvation of sinners. The Lord Jesus enjoyed more solid satisfaction in working out salvation for mankind, than any of His saints can ever enjoy in receiving favours at His hands. He testified that it is more blessed to give than to receive.

The Apostle Paul did not count it a grief and a hardship to be hunted from place to place, imprisoned, scourged, stoned, and counted the offscouring of all things, for the sake of spreading the Gospel and saving souls. It was his joy.

Other individuals have had the same mind with the Apostle. They have been known who would be willing to live a thousand years, or to the end of time, if they could be employed in doing good, in promoting the kingdom of God, and saving the souls of men.

2. It delivers the soul from the power of legal motives. Perfect love leads a person to obey God, not because he fears the wrath of God, or hopes to

be rewarded for doing this or that, but because he loves God, and loves to do the will of God. Perfect love will lead to universal obedience

3. The individual who exercises perfect love will be dead to the world. He will not be influenced by public sentiment, or what this and that man will say or think. See that woman! What is she not willing to do from natural affection to her husband? All that her friends can say against the man of her affection, has not the least influence on her mind, only to make her cling the more closely to him.

So far as the working of mind is concerned, the perfect love of God operates in the same way. The mind that is filled with perfect love, it is impossible to divert from God, while love continues in exercise. Take away his worldly possessions, his friends, his good name, his children; send him to prison, beat him with stripes, bind him to the stake, fill his flesh full of pine knots and set him on fire; and then leave him his God and he is happy. Cases have been known of martyrs who, while their bodies were frying at the stake, were so perfectly happy in God, as to love the sense of pain.

I recollect hearing a friend say, often, "I don't know that I have one thought of living a single moment for any other purpose than to glorify God, any more

than I should think of leaping right into hell." This was said soberly and deliberately, and the whole life of that individual corresponded with the declaration. What was this but perfect love?

4. It is hardly necessary to say that perfect joy and peace are the natural results of perfect love. In 1 Cor. 13, the word translated "charity" means love. "Thou I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." "Thou I have all faith so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Love "is kind," or affectionate in all intercourse with others, never harsh or rude, or needlessly giving pain to any. "Is not puffed up" with pride, but always humble and modest. "Doth not behave itself unseemly," but naturally begets a pleasant and courteous deportment towards all. "Seeketh not her own" or had no selfishness.

"Is not easily provoked." To be easily provoked is always a sign of pride. If a person is full of love, it is impossible to make him exercise sinful anger while love continues. He exercises such indignation as God exercises, at what is base and wrong, but he will not be provoked by it. "Thinketh no evil." Show me a man who is always suspicious of the motives

of others, and I will show you one who has the devil in him, and not the Holy Ghost.

Love "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." See a man who exults at his neighbour's fall, or cries out, "I told you so"; and I tell you that man is far from being perfect in love. "Believeth all things." Ready to believe good wherever there is the least evidence of it, and "hopeth all things."

"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour." Mark that, NO ILL! Perfect love never over-reaches, nor defrauds, nor oppresses, nor does any ill to a neighbour. Would a man under the influence of perfect love, sell his neighbour rum?

One other effect of perfect love: it uniformly shows itself in great efforts for the sanctification of the Church and the salvation of souls.

REMARKS

There may be much light in the mind concerning religion, without love. Those individuals who have much religious knowledge and zeal, without love, are most unlovely and dangerous persons. They are always censorious, proud, heady, high-minded. They may make a strong impression, but do not produce true religion.

Perfect love cannot speak in a rough or abusive manner, either to or of others. The zeal that is governed by perfect love will not spend itself in contending for or against any forms of religion, nor attack minor errors and evils. Love leads to laying stress on the fundamentals in religion. It cleaves to warm-hearted Christians, no matter of what denomination they may be, and loves them, and delights to associate with them. Find a man who loves to attend ecclesiastical meetings, and enters into all the janglings of the day, and that man is not full of love.

How much that is called religion, has no love. It ought to be better understood than it is, that unless love is the mainspring, no matter what the outward action may be, whether praying, praising, giving, or anything else, there is no religion in it.

Those religious excitements which do not consist in the spirit of love, are not revivals of religion. When persons profess to be converted, if love is not the ruling feature in their character they are not truly converted.

See what the world will be, when mankind are universally actuated by a spirit of love. We learn that the time will come, when there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy, and when the spirit of love will

universally prevail. What a change in society! What a change in all the methods of doing business, and in all the intercourse of mankind, when each shall love his neighbour as himself, and seek the good of others as his own.

Could one of the saints of the present day revisit the earth at that period, he would not know the world in which he had lived, all things would be so altered.

The thing on which the Lord Jesus is bent, is to bring all mankind under the influence of love. Is it not a worthy object? He came to destroy the works of the devil, and this is the way to do it. Suppose the world were full of such men as Jesus Christ was in His human nature: compare it with what it is now. Would not such a change be worthy of the Son of God? What a glorious end, to fill the earth with love!

It is easy to see what makes heaven. It is love: perfect love. And it is easy to see what makes heaven begun on earth, in those who are full of love. How sweet their temper; what delightful companions; how blessed to live near them; so full of candour, so kind, so gentle, so careful to avoid offense, so divinely amiable in all things!

And is this to be attained by men? Can we love God, in this world, with all the heart, and soul, and

strength, and mind? Is it our privilege and our duty to possess the Spirit of Christ: and shall we exhibit the spirit of the devil? Beloved, let our hearts be set on perfect love, and let us give God no rest until we feel our hearts full of love, and until all our thoughts and all our lives are full of love to God and man.

Oh, when will the Church come up to this ground? Only let the Church be full of love, and She will be fair as the moon, clear as the sun and terrible to all wickedness, as an army with banners.

HOW TO PROMOTE A REVIVAL

by Charles G. Finney

[edited by William Allen]

Chapter 1
HOW TO PROMOTE A REVIVAL

Break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the Lord, till He come and rain righteousness upon you. Hosea 10:12

The Jews were a nation of farmers, and it is therefore a common thing in the Scriptures to refer for illustrations to their occupation, and to the scenes with which farmers and shepherds are familiar. The prophet Hosea addresses them as a nation of backsliders, and reproves them for their idolatry, and threatens them with the judgments of God.

Fallow ground is ground which has once been tilled, but which now lies waste, and needs to be broken up and mellowed, before it is suited to receive grain.

I. WHAT IT IS TO BREAK UP THE FALLOW GROUND.

To break up the fallow ground, is to break up your

hearts, to prepare your minds to bring forth fruit unto God. The mind of man is often compared in the Bible to ground, and the Word of God to seed sown in it, and the fruit represents the actions and affections of those who receive it.

Sometimes your hearts get matted down, hard and dry, and all run to waste, until there is no such thing as getting fruit from them until they are all broken up, and mellowed and fitted to receive the Word of God. It is this softening of the heart, so as to make it feel the truth, which the prophet calls breaking up your fallow ground.

II. HOW THE FALLOW GROUND IS TO BE BROKEN UP.

It is just as easy to make your minds feel on the subject of religion as it is on any other. God has put these states of mind just as absolutely under your control, as the motions of your limbs. If you mean to break up the fallow ground of your hearts examine thoroughly the state of your hearts, and see where you are: whether you are walking with God every day, or with the devil; whether you are serving God or serving the devil most; whether you are under the dominion of the prince of darkness, or of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Self-examination consists in looking at your lives, in considering your actions, in calling up the past, and learning its true character. Look back over your past history, since you professed conversion. Take up your individual sins one by one, and look at them. I do not mean that you should just cast a glance at your past life, and see that it has been full of sins, and then go to God and make a sort of general confession, and ask for pardon. That is not the way.

You must take them up one by one. It will be a good thing to take a pen and paper, as you go over them, and write them down as they occur to you. Go over them as carefully as a merchant goes over his books; and as often as a sin comes before your memory, add it to the list. General confessions of sin will never do. Your sins were committed one by one; and as far as you can come to them, they ought to be reviewed and repented of one by one.

III. SINS OF OMISSION.

1. **Ingratitude.** Take this sin, for instance, and write down under it all the instances you can remember, wherein you have received favours from God for which you have never exercised gratitude. Go over them three or four times and see what an astonishing amount of mercies there are for which

God has never been praised.

2. **Want of love to God.** Think how grieved and alarmed you would be, if you discovered any flagging of affection for you in your wife, husband, or children; if you saw another engrossing their hearts, and thoughts, and time. Perhaps in such a case you would well nigh die with a just and virtuous jealousy. Now, God calls himself a jealous God; and have you not given your heart to other loves, acted the harlot, and offended Him?

3. **Neglect of the Bible.** Put down the cases when for perhaps weeks, or longer, God's word was not a pleasure.

4. **Unbelief.** Instances in which you have virtually charged the God of truth with lying, by your unbelief of His express promises and declarations.

5. **Neglect of Prayer.** Times when you omitted secret prayer, family prayer, and prayer meetings; or have prayed in such a way as more grievously to offend God than to have neglected it altogether.

6. **Neglect of the Means of Grace.** When you have suffered trifling excuses to prevent your attending meetings, have neglected and poured contempt upon the means of salvation, merely from disrelish of spiritual duties.

7. **Your want of Love for the Souls of your Fellow-men.** Look round upon your friends and relations, and remember how little compassion you have felt for them. You have stood by and seen them going right to hell, and it seems as though you did not care if they did. How many days have there been, in which you did not make their condition the subject of a single fervent prayer, or even an ardent desire for their salvation?

8. **Your want of Care for the Heathen.** Measure your desire for their salvation by the self-denial you practice, in giving of your substance to send them the Gospel. Do you retrench your style of living, and scruple not to subject yourself to any inconvenience to save them? Do you daily pray for them in your room? Do you statedly attend the monthly prayer-meeting? Are you from month to month laying by something to put into the treasury of the Lord, when you go up to pray? If you are not doing these things, and if your soul is not agonized for the poor benighted heathen, why are you such a hypocrite as to pretend to be a Christian? Why, your profession is an insult to Jesus Christ!

9. **Your Neglect of Family Duties.** How you have lived before them, how you have prayed, what an example you have set before them. What direct

efforts do you habitually make for their spiritual good? What duty have you not neglected?

10. **Neglect of Watchfulness over your own Life.** Instances where you have entirely neglected to watch your conduct, and have been off your guard, and have sinned before the world, and before the Church, and before God.

11. **Neglect to Watch over your Brethren.** How often have you broken your covenant, that you would watch over them in the Lord! Would you see your wife or child going into disgrace, or into the fire, and hold your peace? No, you would not. What do you think of yourself, then, to pretend to love Christians, while you can see them going into disgrace and say nothing to them?

12. **Neglect of Self-denial.** There are many professors who are willing to do almost anything in religion that does not require self-denial. They only give of their surplus wealth; and perhaps that poor woman, who puts in twelve and a half cents at the monthly prayer-meeting, has exercised more self-denial than they have in giving thousands.

IV. SINS OF COMMISSION.

1. **Worldly Mindedness.** What has been the state

of your heart in regard to your worldly possessions? Have you looked at them as really yours--as if you had a right to dispose of them as your own, according to your own will? If you have, write that down. If you have loved property, and sought it for its own sake or to gratify lust or ambition, or a worldly spirit, or to lay it up for your families, you have sinned, and must repent.

2. **Pride.** Vanity is a particular form of pride. How many times have you thought more, and taken more pains, and spent more time, about decorating your body to go to church, than you have about preparing your mind for the worship of God? You have gone to the house of God caring more how you appear outwardly in the sight of mortal men, than how your soul appears in the sight of the heart-searching God. You came to divide the worship of God's house, to draw off the attention of God's people to look at your pretty appearance.

3. **Envy.** Look at the cases in which you were envious of those whom you thought were above you in any respect. Be honest with yourself; and if you have harboured this spirit of hell, repent deeply before God, or He will never forgive you.

4. **Censoriousness.** Instances in which you have had a bitter spirit, and have spoken of Christians in

a manner entirely devoid of charity and love; charity, requires you always to hope the best the case will admit, and to put the best construction upon any ambiguous conduct.

5. **Slander.** The times you have spoken behind people's back of the faults, real or supposed, of members of the church or others, unnecessarily, or without good reason. This is slander. You need not lie to be guilty of slander: to tell the truth with the design to injure, is slander.

6. **Levity.** How often have you trifled before God, as you would not have dared to trifle in the presence of an earthly sovereign?

7. **Lying.** Understand now what lying is. Any species of designed deception. If you design to make an impression contrary to the naked truth, you lie. How innumerable are the falsehoods perpetrated every day in business, and in social intercourse, by words, and looks, and actions, designed to make an impression on others contrary to the truth!

8. **Robbing God.** Instances in which you have misspent your time, and squandered hours, which God gave you to serve Him and save souls, in vain amusements or foolish conversation, reading novels

or doing nothing.

9. **Bad Temper.** Perhaps you have abused your wife, or your children, or your family, or servants, or neighbours. Write it all down.

10. **Hindering others from being useful.** Perhaps you have weakened their influence by insinuations against them. You have not only robbed God of your own talents, but tied the hands of somebody else.

If you find you have committed a fault against an individual, and that individual is within your reach, go and confess it immediately, and get that out of the way. If the individual you have injured is too far off for you to go and see him, sit down and write him a letter, and confess the injury, and put it into the mail immediately. If you have defrauded anybody, send the money, the full amount and the interest.

Go thoroughly to work in all this. Go now. Do not put it off; that will only make the matter worse. Confess to God those sins that have been committed against God, and to man those sins that have been committed against man. Do not think of getting off by going round the stumbling-blocks. Take them up out of the way. In breaking up your fallow ground, you must remove every obstruction. Things may be left that you think are little things, and you may

wonder why you do not feel as you wish to feel in religion, when the reason is that your proud and carnal mind has covered up something which God required you to confess and remove. Break up all the ground and turn it over. Do not "balk" it, as the farmers say; do not turn it aside for little difficulties; drive the plough right through them, beam deep, and turn the ground all up, so that it may all be mellow and soft, and fit to receive the seed and bear fruit a hundred fold.

As you go over the catalogue of your sins, be sure to resolve upon present and entire reformation. Wherever you find anything wrong, resolve at once, in the strength of God, to sin no more in that way. It will be of no benefit to examine yourself, unless you determine to amend, in every particular, what you find wrong in heart, temper, or conduct.

If you find, as you go on with this duty, that your mind is still all dark, cast about you, and you will find there is some reason for the Spirit of God to depart from you. You have not been faithful and thorough. In the progress of such a work you have got to do violence to yourself, and bring yourself as a rational being up to this work, with the Bible before you, and try your heart until you do feel.

You need not expect that God will work a miracle for

you to break up your fallow ground. It is to be done by means. Fasten your attention to the subject of your sins. You cannot look at your sins long and thoroughly, and see how bad they are, without feeling, and feeling deeply. Experience fully proves the benefit of going over our history in this way. Set yourself to the work now; resolve that you will never stop until you find you can pray. You never will have the Spirit of God dwelling in you until you have unraveled this whole mystery of iniquity, and spread out your sins before God.

Let there be this deep work of repentance and full confession, this breaking down before God, and you will have as much of the spirit of prayer as your body can bear up under. The reason why so few Christians know anything about the spirit of prayer is, because they never would take the pains to examine themselves properly, and so never knew what it was to have their hearts all broken up in this way.

REMARKS.

It will do no good to preach to you while your hearts are in this hardened, and waste, and fallow state. The farmer might just as well sow his grain on the rock. It will bring forth no fruit. A preacher may wear

out his life and do very little good, while there are so many stony-ground hearers who have never had their fallow ground broken up.

If your fallow ground is broken up, then the way to get more feeling is to go out and see sinners on the road to hell, and talk to them, and guide inquiring souls, and you will get more feeling.

Chapter II
WHEN A REVIVAL IS TO BE EXPECTED.

Wilt thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee? Psalm 86:6

This Psalm seems to have been written soon after the return of the people of Israel from the Babylonish captivity. Since God in His providence had re-established the ordinances of His house among them, the Psalmist prays that there may be a revival of religion to crown the work.

I. WHEN A REVIVAL OF RELIGION IS NEEDED.

1. When there is a want of brotherly love and Christian confidence among professors of religion, then a revival is needed. When Christians have

sunk down into a low and backslidden state, they neither have nor ought to have, nor is there reason to have, the same love and confidence toward each other, as then they are all alive, and active, and living holy lives.

2. When there are dissensions, jealousies, and evil speakings among professors of religion, then there is a great need of a revival. These things show that Christians have got far from God, and it is time to think earnestly of a revival. Religion cannot prosper with such things in the Church, and nothing can put an end to them like a revival.

3. When there is a worldly spirit in the Church. It is manifest that the Church is sunk down into a low and backslidden state, when you see Christians conform to the world in dress, equipage, parties, seeking worldly amusements, reading novels, and other books such as the world read. It shows that they are far from God, and that there is great need of a revival of religion.

4. When the Church finds its members falling into gross and scandalous sins, then it is time for the Church to awake and cry to God for a revival of religion.

5. When Sinners are careless and stupid, and

sinking into hell unconcerned, it is time the Church should bestir themselves. It is as much the duty of the Church to awake as it is for the firemen to awake when a fire breaks out in the night in a great city. And yet their guilt would not compare with the guilt of Christians who sleep while sinners around them are sinking stupid into the fires of hell.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF A REVIVAL OF RELIGION IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES

1. A revival of religion is the only possible thing that can wipe away the reproach which covers the Church, and restore religion to the place it ought to have in the estimation of the public. Without a revival, this reproach will cover the Church more and more, until it is overwhelmed with universal contempt.

2. Nothing but a revival of religion can prevent the means of grace from doing a great injury to the ungodly. Without a revival, they will grow harder and harder under preaching, and will experience a more horrible damnation than they would if they had never heard the Gospel. Your children and your friends will go down to a much more horrible fate in hell, in consequence of the means of grace, if there are no revivals to convert them to God.

III. WHEN A REVIVAL OF RELIGION MAY BE EXPECTED

1. When the providence of God indicates that a revival is at hand. The indications of God's providence are sometimes so plain as to amount to a revelation of His will. Cases have occurred in this country, where the providential manifestations were so plain, that those who were careful observers, felt no hesitation in saying, that God was coming to pour out His Spirit, and grant a revival of religion. There are various ways for God to indicate His will to a people; sometimes by giving them peculiar means, sometimes by peculiar and alarming events, sometimes by remarkably favouring the employment of means, by the weather, health, etc.

2. When the wickedness of the wicked grieves, and humbles, and distresses Christians. Sometimes Christians do not seem to mind anything about the wickedness around them. Or if they talk about it, it is in a cold, and callous, and unfeeling way, as if they despaired of a reformation: they are disposed to scold at sinners--not to feel the compassion of the Son of God for them.

But sometimes the conduct of the wicked drives Christians to prayer, and breaks them down, and

makes them sorrowful and tender-hearted, so that they can weep day and night, and instead of scolding and reproaching them, they pray earnestly for them. Then you may expect a revival.

Sometimes the wicked will get up an opposition to religion. And when this drives Christians to their knees in prayer to God, with strong crying and tears, you may be certain there is going to be a revival. The prevalence of wickedness is no evidence at all that there is not going to be a revival. That is often God's time to work. When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifts up a standard against him.

Often the first indication of a revival, is the devil's getting up something new in opposition. It will invariably have one of two effects. It will either drive Christians to God, or it will drive them farther away from God, to some carnal policy or other that will only make things worse.

Let hell boil over if it will, and spew out as many devils as there are stones in the pavement, if it will only drive Christians to God in prayer--they cannot hinder a revival. I have known instances where a revival has broken in upon the ranks of the enemy, almost as sudden as a clap of thunder, and scattered them, taken the ring-leaders as trophies,

and broken up their party in an instant.

3. A revival may be expected when Christians have a spirit of prayer for a revival. That is when they pray as if their hearts were set upon a revival. Sometimes Christians are not engaged in prayer for a revival, not even when they are warm in prayer. Their minds are upon something else; they are praying for something else--the salvation of the heathen and the like--and not for a revival among themselves. But when they feel the want of a revival, they pray for it; they feel for their own families and neighbourhoods; they pray for them as if they could not be denied.

What constitutes a spirit of prayer? Is it many prayers and warm words? No! Prayer is the state of the heart. The spirit of prayer is a state of continual desire and anxiety of mind for the salvation of sinners. It is something that weighs Christians down. It is the same, so far as the laws of mind are concerned, as when a man is anxious for some worldly interest. A Christian who has this spirit of prayer feels anxious for souls. It is the subject of his thought all the time, and makes him look and act as if he had a load on his mind. He thinks of it by day, and dreams of it by night. This is properly, "praying without ceasing." His prayers seem to flow from his

heart liquid as water; "O Lord, revive Thy work."

Sometimes this feeling is very deep; persons have been bowed down, so that they could neither stand nor sit. I can name men in this State, of firm nerves, who stand high in character, who have been absolutely crushed with grief for the state of sinners, until they were as helpless as children.

The feeling is not always so great as this, but such things are much more common than is supposed. In the great revivals in 1826, they were common. This is by no means enthusiasm. It is just what Paul felt when he said: "My little children, of whom I travail in birth." I heard of a person in this State, who prayed for sinners, and finally got into such a state of mind, that she could not live without prayer. She could not rest day nor night, unless there was somebody praying. Then she would be at ease; but if they ceased, she would shriek in agony until there was praying again. And this continued for two days, until she prevailed in prayer, and her soul was relieved.

This travail of soul is that deep agony which persons feel when they lay hold on God for such a blessing, and will not let Him go till they receive it. I do not mean to be understood that it is essential to a spirit of prayer, that the distress should be so great as this. But this deep, continual, earnest desire for the

salvation of sinners, is what constitutes the spirit of prayer for a revival.

Sometimes ministers have had this distress about their congregations, so that they felt as if they could not live unless they could see a revival. Sometimes elders and deacons, or private members, of the Church, men and woman, have the spirit of prayer for a revival of religion, so that they will hold on and prevail with God, until He pours out His Spirit.

The first ray of light that broke in upon the midnight which rested on the churches in Oneida county, in the fall of 1825, was from a woman in feeble health, who, I believe, had never been in a powerful revival. Her soul was exercised about sinners. She was in an agony for the land. She did not know what ailed her, but she kept praying more and more, until it seemed as if her agony would destroy her body. At length she became full of joy, and exclaimed: "God has come! God as come! There is no mistake about it, the work is begun, and is going all over the region." And sure enough, the work began, and her family were almost all converted, and the work spread all over that part of the country.

Generally, there are but few professors of religion that know anything about this spirit of prayer which prevails with God. I have been amazed to see such

accounts as are often published about revivals, as if the revival had come without any cause--nobody knew why or wherefore. I have sometimes inquired into such cases, when it had been given out that nobody knew anything about it, until one Sabbath they saw in the face of the congregation that God was there; or they saw it in their conference room or prayer meeting, and were astonished at the mysterious sovereignty of God in bringing in a revival without any apparent connection with means.

Now mark me! Go and inquire among the obscure members of the church, and you will always find that somebody had been praying for a revival, and was expecting it--some man or woman had been agonizing in prayer for the salvation of sinners until the blessing was gained. Generally, a revival is more or less extensive, as there are more or less persons who have the spirit of prayer.

4. Another sign that a revival may be expected is when the attention of ministers is especially directed to this particular object, and when their preaching and other efforts are aimed particularly for the conversion.

There never will be a revival until somebody makes particular efforts for this end. But when the attention of a minister is directed to the state of the families in

his congregation and his heart is full of feeling of the necessity of a revival, and when he puts forth the proper efforts for this end, then you may be prepared to expect a revival.

The connection between the right use of means for a revival, and a revival, is as naturally sure as between the right use of means to raise grain, and a crop of wheat.

I have seldom seen an individual fail, when he used the means of promoting a revival in earnest, in the manner pointed out in the Work of God. I believe a man may enter on the work of promoting a revival with as reasonable an expectation of success, as he can enter on any work with an expectation of success--with the same expectation as the farmer has of a crop when he sows his grain. I have sometimes seen this tried and succeed, under circumstances the most forbidding that can be conceived.

The great revival in Rochester began under the most disadvantageous circumstances that could well be imagined. But there were a few remarkable cases of the spirit of prayer, which assured us that God was there, and we went on; and the more Satan opposed, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up the standard higher and higher until finally a wave of

salvation rolled over the place.

5. A revival of religion may be expected when Christians begin to confess their sins to one another. When there is an ingenuous breaking down, and a pouring out of the heart in making confession of their sins, the flood-gates will soon burst open, and salvation will flow over the place.

6. A revival may be expected whenever Christians are found willing to make the sacrifice necessary to carry it on. They must be willing to sacrifice their feeling, their business, their time, to help forward the work. Ministers must be willing to lay out their strength, and to jeopardy their health and life. They must be willing to offend the impenitent by plain and faithful dealing and perhaps offend many members of the church who will not come up to the work. They must take a decided stand with the revival, be the consequences what they may.

7. A revival may be expected when ministers and professors of religion are willing to have God promote it by what instruments He pleases. Sometimes ministers are not willing to have a revival unless they can have the management of it, or unless their agency can be conspicuous in promoting it. Such men will sleep on until they are awakened by the judgment trumpet, without a

revival, unless they are willing that God should come in His own way--unless they are willing to have anything or anybody employed, that will do good.

REMARKS.

Do you wish for a revival? Will you have one? If God should ask you this moment, by an audible voice from heaven: "Do you want a revival?" would you dare to say: "Yes"? "Are you willing to make the sacrifices?" would you answer: "Yes"? "When shall it begin?" would you answer: "Let it begin tonight--let it begin here--let it begin in my heart NOW"? Would you dare to say so to God, if you should hear His voice tonight?

Chapter III
THE NECESSITY AND EFFECT OF UNION.

Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. Matthew 17:19

The design of our Lord, in this text, was to teach the

importance and influence of union in prayer and effort to promote religion. He states the strongest possible case, by taking the number "two" as the least number between whom there can be an agreement. It is the fact of their agreement upon which He lays the stress.

I. IN ORDER TO COME WITHIN THIS PROMISE, WE ARE TO BE AGREED IN PRAYER.

1. That is we should agree in our desires for the object. It is necessary to have desires for the object, and to be agreed in those desires. Very often individuals pray in words for the same thing, when they are by no means agreed in desiring that thing.

2. We must agree in the motive from which we desire the object. It is not enough that our desires for an object should be the same, but the reason why must be the same. An individual may desire a revival, for the glory of God, and the salvation of sinners. Another member of the church may also desire a revival, but from very different motives. Some, perhaps, desire a revival for the sake of having the church increased so as to be more numberous and more respectable. Sometimes people desire a revival from mere natural affection, so as to have their friends converted and saved.

3. We must be agreed in desiring it for good reasons. These desires must not only be united, and from the same motives, but they must be from good motives. The supreme motive must be to honor and glorify God. People may even desire a revival, and agree in desiring it, and agree in the motives, and yet if these motives be not good, God will not grant their desires.

I have had a multitude of letters and requests that I should visit such and such places, and endeavour to promote a revival, and many reasons have been urged why I should go; but when I came to weigh their reasons, I have sometimes found every one of them selfish. And God would look upon every one with abhorrence.

There are a great many things often said in favour of the cause of missions, which are of this character, appealing to wrong motives. How often are we told of six hundred millions of heathens, who are in danger of going to hell, and how little is said of the guilt of six hundred millions engaged and banded together as rebels against God, or of the dishonour and contempt poured upon God our Maker by such a world of outlaws.

Until the Church will look at the dishonour done to God, little will be done. It is this which must be made

to stand out before the world, it is this which must be deeply felt by the Church, it is this which must be fully exhibited to sinners, before the world can ever be converted.

Parents never agree in praying for the conversion of their children in such a way as to have their prayers answered, until they feel that their children are rebels. If they would have their prayers prevail, they must come to take God's part against their children, even though for their perverseness and incorrigible wickedness he should be obliged to send them to hell.

4. If we would be so united as to prevail in prayer, we must agree in faith. That is, we must concur in expecting the blessing prayed for. We must understand the reason why it is to be expected, we must see the evidence on which faith ought to rest, and must absolutely believe that the blessing will come, or we do not bring ourselves within the promise.

5. So, again, we must be agreed as to the time when we desire the blessing to come. Suppose a church should undertake to pray for a revival, and should all be agreed in desiring a revival, but not as to the time when it shall be. Suppose some wish to have the revival come now, and are all prepared,

and have their hearts waiting for the Spirit of God to come down, and are willing to give time and attention and labour to it NOW; but others are not quite ready, they have something else to attend to just at present, some worldly object which they want to accomplish, some piece of business in hand, and want to finish this thing, and then. But they cannot possibly find time to attend to it now.

II. WE ARE TO AGREE IN EVERYTHING THAT IS ESSENTIAL TO OBTAINING THE BLESSING THAT WE SEEK.

You see that the language of the text: "If two of you shall agree as touching anything that they shall ask." That is, the agreement or union must comprise everything that is essential to the bestowment and reception of the blessing.

1. They must be agreed in understanding that revivals are not miracles, but that they are brought about by the use of means, like other events.

2. They must be agreed in understanding that human agency is just as indispensable to a revival as divine agency. God has put the Gospel treasure in earthen vessels. He has seen fit to employ men in preaching the Word; that is, He has seen that

human agency is that which He can best employ in saving sinners. And there is not one in a thousand, if one in a million, converted in any other way than through the truth, made known and urged by human instrumentality.

3. It is important that there should be union in regard to the measures essential to the promotion of a revival. Let individuals agree to do anything whatever, and if they are not agreed in their measures, they will run into confusion, and counteract one another.

4. They must be agreed in the manner of dealing with impenitent sinners. It is a point immensely important that the church should be agreed in their treatment of sinners. Suppose that they are not agreed, and one will tell a sinner one thing and another, another. What confusion! Every Christian ought to have a clear understand of this subject, and all speak the same thing and give the same directions; and then the sinner will find no one to take his part, and get no relief or comfort until he repents.

5. They must be agreed in removing the impediments to a revival. If a church expects a revival, they must take up the stumbling-blocks out of the way. If there be rotten members in the church,

they should be removed, and the church should all agree to cut them off.

6. In mutual confessions. Whenever wrong has been done to any, there should be a full confession. Let the members of the church be truly agreed, in breaking down, and confessing their own faults, and in cherishing a tender, merciful, forgiving, Christ-like spirit, towards those who they think have done them wrong, and then the Spirit will come down upon them without measure.

In a word, if Christians expect to unite in prayer and effort, so as to prevail with God, they must be agreed in speaking and doing the same things, in walking by the same rule, and maintaining the same principles, and in persevering until they obtain the blessing, so as not to hinder or thwart each other's efforts. All this is evidently implied in being agreed "as touching" the things for which they are praying.

III. HOW CHURCHES CAN HELP MINISTERS.

1. By all means keep clear of the idea, both in theory and practice, that a minister is to promote revivals alone. I will mention one case. A minister, some years since, was labouring where there was a revival; and was visited by an elder of a church at

some distance, who wanted him to go and preach there. There was no revival there, and never had been; and the elder complained about their state, and said they had had two excellent ministers, one had worn himself completely out, and died; and the other had exhausted himself, and got discouraged, and left them; and they were a poor and feeble church, and their prospects very dark, unless they could have a revival, and so he begged this minister to go and help them.

He seemed to be very sorrowful, and the minister heard his whining, and at last replied by asking, "Why did you never have a revival?" "I do not know," said the elder: "Our minister laboured very hard, but the church did not seem to wake up, and somehow there seemed to be no revival." "Well, now," said the minister: "I see what you want; you have killed one of God's ministers, and broke down another, so that he had to leave you; and now you want to get another there and kill him, and the devil has sent you here to get me to go and rock your cradle for you. God forbid that you should ever have a minister until the church will wake up to duty."

The elder was affected, for he was a good man. The tears came in his eyes, and he said it was no more than they deserved: "And now," said the minister,

"will you be faithful, and go home and tell the church what I say? If you will, and they will be faithful and wake up to duty, they shall have a minister, I will warrant them that." The elder said he would, and he was true to his word; he went home and told the church how cruel it was for them to ask another minister to come among them, unless they would wake up. They felt it, and confessed their sins, and waked up to duty, and a minister was sent to them, and a precious and powerful revival followed.

2. Pray for your minister. Ministers do not ask people to pray for them simply as men, nor that they may be filled with an abundance of the Spirit's influences, merely to promote their personal enjoyment. But they know, that unless the church greatly desire a blessing upon the labour of a minister, it is tempting God for him to expect it.

I have known a church bear their minister on their arms in prayer from day to day, and watch with anxiety unutterable, to see that he has the Holy Ghost with him in his labours! When they feel and pray thus, O what feelings and what looks are manifest in the congregation! They have felt anxiety unutterable to have the Word come with power and take effect; and when they see their prayer answered, and they hear a word or a sentence,

come WARM from the heart, and taking effect among the people, you can see their whole souls look out of their eyes!

3. A minister should be provided for by the church, and his support guaranteed irrespective of the ungodly.

4. See that everything is so arranged that people can sit comfortably in meeting. If people do not sit easy, it is difficult, to get or keep their attention. And if they be not attentive, they cannot be converted.

5. See that the house of God is kept clean. The house of God should be kept as clean as you want your own house to be kept.

6. It is important that the house should be just warm enough and not too warm. The house should be well ventilated. Of all houses, a church should be the most perfectly ventilated.

7. The church should watch for the effect of preaching. I do not mean that they should be just stretching their necks and staring about the house; but they should observe, as they may, and if they find any person affected by the preaching, throw themselves in his way, and guide him to the Saviour.

8. Church members ought to study and inquire what

they can do, and then do it. Christians should be trained like a band of soldiers. It is the duty and office of a minister to train them for usefulness, to teach and direct them, and lead them on, in such a way as to produce the greatest amount of moral influence; and then they should stand their ground and do their duty, otherwise they will be right in the way.

IV. HINDRANCES TO REVIVALS.

1. A revival will cease when Christians consent that it should cease. Sometimes Christians see that the revival is in danger of ceasing, and that if something effectual be not done, it will come to a stand. If this fact distress them, and drive them to prayer, and to fresh efforts, the work will not cease.

2. A revival will cease whenever Christians become mechanical in their attempts to promote it. When their faith is strong, and their hearts are warm and mellow, and their prayers full of holy emotion, and their words with power, then the work goes on. But when their prayers begin to be cold and without emotion, and their deep-toned feeling is gone, and they begin to labour mechanically, and to use words without feeling, then the revival will cease.

3. When Christians get proud of their great revival, it will cease. I mean those Christians who have before been instrumental in promoting it. When the part of the Church, who work, begin to think what a great revival they have had, and how they have laboured and prayed, and how bold and how zealous they have been, and how much good they have done, then the Spirit withdraws from them, and the revival ceases.

4. The revival will stop when the Church get exhausted by labour. Multitudes of Christians commit a great mistake here in time of revival. They are so thoughtless, and have so little judgment, that they will break up all their habits of living, neglect to eat and sleep at the proper hours, and let the excitement run away with them, so that they overdo their bodies, and are so imprudent that they soon become exhausted, and it is impossible for them to continue in the work. Revivals often cease, and declension follow, from negligence and imprudence, in this respect, on the part of those engaged in carrying them on.

5. The Spirit may be grieved by a spirit of boasting of the revival. Sometimes, as soon as a revival commences, you will see it blazed out in the newspapers. And most commonly this will kill the

revival.

So the Spirit is grieved by saying or publishing things that are calculated to undervalue the work of God. When a blessed work of God is spoken lightly of, not rendering to God the glory due to His name.

6. A revival will decline and cease, unless Christians are frequently re-converted. By this I mean, that Christians, in order to keep in the spirit of a revival, commonly need to be frequently convicted, and humbled and broken down before God.

I have never laboured in revivals in company with any one who would keep in the work and be fit to manage a revival continually, who did not pass through this process of breaking down as often as once in two or three weeks.

Revivals decline, commonly, because it is found impossible to make the Church feel their guilt and their dependence, so as to break down before God. It is important that ministers should understand this, and learn how to break down the Church, and break down themselves when they need it, or else Christians will soon become mechanical in their work, and lose their fervour and their power with God.

REMARKS.

We see what glorious things may be expected for Zion, whenever the churches generally shall be agreed on these subjects. Only let them feel as the heart of one man, and be agreed as to what ought to be done for the salvation of the world, and the Millennium will come at once.

There is a vast ignorance in the churches on the subject of revivals. After all the revivals that have been enjoyed, and all that has been said and written and printed concerning revivals, there are very few who have any real, consistent knowledge on the subject. And when there is a revival, how few there are who can take hold to labour and promote it as if they understood what they were about. How few persons are to be found, who have ever taken up revivals of religion as a subject to be studied and understood.

How important it is that the Church should be trained and instructed, so as to know what to do in a revival. They should be trained and disciplined like an army; each one having a place to fill, and something to do, and knowing where he belongs, and what he has to do, and how to do it. We see why revivals are often so short, and why they so often produce a reaction. It is because the Church

do not understand the subject.

We see the guilt of ministers, in not informing themselves, and rightly and speedily instructing the churches upon this momentous subject. No minister has yet begun to understand or do his duty, if he has neglected to teach his church to work for God in the promotion of revivals.

Chapter IV.
HOW TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.

He that winneth souls is wise. Proverbs 1:30

I. THE BIBLE ASCRIBES CONVERSION TO MEN.

There are many passages which present the conversion of sinners to the work of men. Daniel 12:3 "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." 1 Cor. 4:15 " For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel."

II. THIS IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THOSE

PASSAGES IN WHICH CONVERSION IS ASCRIBED TO GOD.

The Scriptures ascribe conversion to four different agencies: to men, to God, to the truth, and to the sinner himself. In the conversion of a sinner, it is true that God gives the truth efficiency to turn the sinner to God. Not only does the minister cry: "Stop," but through the living voice of the preacher, the Spirit cries: "Stop." The preacher cries: "Turn ye, why will ye die?" The Spirit pours the expostulation home with such power, that the sinner turns. Now, in speaking of this change, it is perfectly proper to say, that the Spirit turned him; just as you would say of a man who had persuaded another to change his mind on the subject of politics, that he had converted him and brought him over. It is also proper to say that the truth converted him; as, in a case when the political sentiments of a man were changed by a certain argument, we should say that argument brought him over. So, also with perfect propriety may we ascribe the change to the preacher, or to him who had presented the motives; just as we should say of a lawyer who had prevailed in his argument with a jury, he has got his case, he has converted the jury. It is also with the same propriety ascribed to the individual himself, whose heart is changed; we should say that he has

changed his mind, he has come over, he has repented. Now it is strictly true, and true in the most absolute and highest sense, the act is his own act, the turning is his own turning, while God by the truth has induced him to turn; still it is strictly true that he has turned, and has done it himself.

Thus you see the sense in which it is the work of God; and also the sense in which it is the sinner's own work. The Spirit of God, by the truth, influences the sinner to change and in this sense He is the efficient cause of the change. But the sinner actually changes, and is therefore himself, in the most proper sense, the author of the change.

III. SEVERAL IMPORTANT PARTICULARS CONNECTED WITH PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

1. All preaching should be practical. The proper end of all doctrine is practice. Anything brought forward as doctrine, which cannot be made use of as practical, is not preaching the Gospel. There is none of that sort of preaching in the Bible.

I have known a minister in the midst of a revival, while surrounded with anxious sinners, leave off labouring to convert souls for the purpose of "indoctrinating" the young converts, for fear

somebody else should indoctrinate them before him. And there the revival stops! Either his doctrine was not true, or it was not preached in the right way.

All preaching should be doctrinal, and all preaching should be practical. The very design of doctrine is to regulate practice. Any preaching that has not this tendency is not the Gospel. A loose, exhortatory style of preaching may affect the passions, and may produce excitement, but will never sufficiently instruct the people so as to secure sound conversions. On the other hand, preaching doctrine in an abstract manner may fill the head with notions, but will never sanctify the heart or life.

2. Preaching should be direct. The Gospel should be preached to men, and not about them. The minister must address his hearers. He must preach to them about themselves, and not leave the impression that he is preaching to them about others. He will never do them any good, further than he succeeds in convincing each individual that he means him.

Many preachers seem very much afraid of making the impression that they mean anybody in particular. Now this is anything but preaching the Gospel. Thus did not the prophets, nor Christ, nor the apostles. Nor do those ministers do this who are successful in

winning souls to Christ.

3. Another very important thing to be regarded in preaching, is, that the minister should hunt after sinners and Christians, wherever they may have entrenched themselves in inaction. It is not the design of preaching to make men easy and quiet, but to make them ACT.

A minister ought to know the religious opinions of every sinner in his congregation. Indeed, a minister in the country is inexcusable if he does not. Every sinner has some hiding-place, some entrenchment, where he lingers. He is in possession of some darling LIE, with which he is quieting himself. Let the minister find it out, and get it away, either in the pulpit or in private, or the man will go to hell in his sins, and his blood will be found in the minister's skirt.

4. Another important thing to observe is, that a minister should dwell most on those particular points which are most needed. I have been in many places in times of revivals, and I have never been able to employ precisely the same course of preaching in one as in another. Some are entrenched behind one refuge, and some behind another. In one place, the church will need to be instructed; in another, sinners. In one place, one set of truths; in another,

another set. A minister must find out where they are, and preach accordingly. I believe this is the experience of all preachers who are called to labour from field to field.

5. If a minister means to promote a revival, he should be very careful not to introduce controversy. He will grieve away the Spirit of God. In this way, probably, more revivals are put down, than in any other.

6. The Gospel should be preached in those proportions that the whole Gospel may be brought before the minds of the people, and produce its proper influence. If too much stress is laid on one class of truths, the Christian character will not have its due proportion. Its symmetry will not be perfect.

7. It is of great importance that the sinner should be made to feel his guilt, and not be left to the impression that he is unfortunate. Until you can do this, the Gospel will never take effect.

8. A prime object with the preacher must be to make PRESENT OBLIGATION felt. I have talked, I suppose, with many thousands of anxious sinners; and I have found that they had never before felt the pressure of present obligation. The impression is not commonly made by ministers in their preaching,

that sinners are expected to repent NOW.

Until the sinner's conscience is reached on this subject, you preach to him in vain. And until ministers learn how to preach so as to make the right impression the world never can be converted. Oh, to what an alarming extent does the impression now prevail among the impenitent, that they are not expected to repent now.

9. Sinners should be made to feel that if they now grieve away the Spirit of God, it is very probably that they will be lost forever. There is infinite danger of this. They should be made to understand why they are dependent on the Spirit, and that it is not because they cannot do what God commands, but because they are unwilling. They are so opposed and so unwilling, that they never will repent in this world, unless God sends His Holy Spirit upon them.

Show them, too, that a sinner under the Gospel, who hears the truth preached, if converted at all, is generally converted young; and if not converted while young, he is commonly given up of God. Where the truth is preached, sinners are either hardened or converted. I know some old sinners are converted, but they are rather exceptions, and by no means common.

IV. THE MANNER OF PREACHING.

1. It should be conversational. Preaching, to be understood, should be colloquial in its style. A minister must preach just as he would talk, if he wishes fully to be understood. Nothing is more calculated to make a sinner feel that religion is some mysterious thing that he cannot understand, than this mouthing, formal, lofty style of speaking, so generally employed in the pulpit. The Gospel will never produce any great effect until ministers talk to their hearers in the pulpit, as they talk in private conversation.

2. It must be in the language of common life. Not only should it be colloquial in its style, but the words should be such as are in common use. Otherwise they will not be understood. In the New Testament you will observe that Jesus invariably uses words of the most common kind. You scarcely find a word of His instructions that any child cannot understand. The language of the Gospels is the plainest, simplest, and most easily understood of any language in the world. For a minister to neglect this principle, is wicked.

3. Preaching should be parabolical. That is, illustrations should be constantly used, drawn from

incidents, real or supposed. Jesus constantly illustrated His instructions in this way. He would either advance a principle and then illustrate it by a parable, that is, a short story of some event, real or imaginary, or else he would bring out the principle in the parable. Truths not illustrated, are generally just as well calculated to convert sinners as a mathematical demonstrations.

The illustration should, if possible, be a matter of common occurrence, and the more common the occurrence the more sure it will be not to fix attention upon itself, but serve as a medium through which the truth is conveyed.

4. Preaching should be repetitious. If a minister wishes to preach with effect, he must not be afraid of repeating whatever he may see is not perfectly understood by his hearers. If a minister had his eyes on the people he is preaching to, he can commonly tell by their looks whether they understand him. And if he sees they do not understand any particular point, let him stop and illustrate it. If they do not understand one illustration, let him give another, and make it all clear to their minds before he goes on. Men are commonly so occupied with the affairs of this world, that they do not think much on the subject of religion, and they therefore need the

plainest preaching, and they will like it.

5. A minister should always feel deeply his subject, and then he will suit the action to the word, and the word to the action, so as to make the full impression which the truth is calculated to make. It requires the utmost stretch of art, on the stage for the actors to make their hearers feel. The design of elocution is to teach this skill. But if a man feels his subject fully, he will naturally do it.

I once heard a remark made, respecting a young minister's preaching, which was instructive. He was uneducated, in the common sense of the term, but well educated to win souls. It was said of him: "The manner in which he comes in, and sits in the pulpit, and rises to speak, is a sermon of itself. It shows that he has something to say that is important and solemn." That man's manner of saying some things I have known to move the feelings of a whole congregation, when the same things said in a prosing way would have produced no effect at all.

6. A minister must anticipate the objections of sinners, and answer them. But ministers often leave one difficulty and another, untouched. Sinners who hear them feel the difficulty, and it is never got over in their minds, and they never know how to remove it, and perhaps the minister never takes the trouble

to know that such difficulties exist, and yet he wonders why his congregation is not converted, and why there is no revival. How can he wonder at it, when he has never hunted up the difficulties and objections that sinners feel, and removed them?

7. If a minister means to preach the Gospel with effect, he must be sure not to be monotonous. And a minister cannot be monotonous in preaching, if he feels what he says.

8. A minister should address the feelings enough to secure attention, and then deal with the conscience and probe to the quick. If attention flags at any time, appeal to the feelings again, and rouse them up; but do your work with conscience.

9. If he can, it is desirable that a minister should learn the effect of one sermon, before he preaches another.

REMARKS.

Before the Gospel takes general effect, we must have a class of extempore preachers, for the following reasons:

(a) No set of men can stand the labour of writing sermons and doing all the preaching which will be requisite.

(b) Written preaching is not calculated to produce the requisite effect. Such preaching does not present the truth in right shape.

(c) It is impossible for a man who writes his sermons to arrange his matter, and turn and choose his thoughts, so as to gain such an effect as when he addresses the people directly, and makes them feel that he means them.

We shall never have a set of men in our halls of legislation in our courts of justice, and in our pulpits, that are powerful and overwhelming speakers, and can carry the world before them, until our system of education teaches them to think, closely, rapidly, consecutively, and until all their habits of speaking in the schools are extemporaneous.

In delivering a sermon in this essay style of writing, it is impossible that nearly all the fire of meaning, and power of gesture, and looks, and attitude, and emphasis, should not be lost. We can never have the full meaning of the Gospel until we throw away our notes.

A minister's course of study and training for his work should be exclusively theological. But you will ask, should not a minister understand science? I would answer, Yes, the more the better. I would that

ministers might understand all science. But it should all be in connection with theology. Studying science is studying the works of God. And studying theology is studying God.

The student spends four years in college at classical studies, and no God in them; and then three years in the seminary, at theological studies; and what then? Poor young man. Set him to work, and you will find that he is not educated for the ministry at all. The Church groans under his preaching, because he does not preach with unction, nor with power. He has been spoiled in training.

It is in vain for the schools to try to force down the throats of the churches a race of ministers who are learned in everything but what they most need to know. The churches have pronounced them not made right, and they will not sustain that which is notoriously so inadequate as the present system of theological education.

Pray for ministers, that God would give them this wisdom to win souls; and pray that God would bestow upon the Church the wisdom and the means to educate a generation of ministers who will go forward and convert the world.

The Church must travail in prayer, and groan and

agonize for this. This is now the pearl of great price to the Church--to have a supply of the right sort of ministers. The coming of the Millennium depends on having a different sort of ministers, who are more thoroughly educated for their work. And this we shall have so sure as the promise of the Lord holds good. Such a ministry as is now in the Church will never convert the world; but the world is to be converted; and therefore God intends to have ministers who will do it: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth labourers into His harvest."

Chapter V.
HOW TO WIN SOULS.

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." 1 Tim. 4:16

I beg leave in this article to suggest to my younger brethren in the ministry some thoughts on the manner of so preaching the Gospel as to secure the salvation of souls. They are the result of much study, much prayer for divine teaching, and a

practical experience of many years.

I understand the admonition at the head of this article to relate to the matter, order, and manner of preaching.

1. They are free moral agents, of course--rational, accountable. They are in rebellion against God, wholly alienated, intensely prejudiced, and committed against Him. They are committed to self-gratification as the end of their being.

2. This committed state is moral depravity, the fountain of sin within them, from which flow by a natural law all their sinful ways. This committed voluntary state is their "wicked heart." This it is that needs a radical change.

3. God is infinitely benevolent, and unconverted sinners are supremely selfish, so that they are radically opposed to God. Their committal to the gratification of their appetites and propensities is known in Bible language as the "carnal mind"; or, as in the margin, "the minding of the flesh," which is enmity against God.

4. This enmity is voluntary, and must be overcome, if at all, by the Word of God, made effectual by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel is adapted to this end, and when wisely presented we may

confidently expect the effectual co-operation of the Holy Spirit. This is implied in our commission, "Go and disciple all nations, and lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

5. If we are unwise, illogical and out of all natural order in presenting the Gospel, we have no warrant for expecting divine co-operation. In winning souls, as in everything else, God works through and in accordance with natural laws. Hence, if we would win souls we must wisely adapt means to this end. We must present those truths and in that order adapted to the natural laws of mind, of thought and mental action. A false mental philosophy will greatly misled us, and we shall often be found ignorantly working against the agency of the Holy Spirit.

6. Sinners must be convicted of their enmity. They do not know God, and consequently are often ignorant of the opposition of their hearts to Him. "By the law is the knowledge of sin," because by the law the sinner gets his first true idea of God. By the law he first learns that God is perfectly benevolent, and infinitely opposed to all selfishness. This law, then, should be arrayed in all its majesty against the selfishness and enmity of the sinner.

7. This law carries irresistible conviction of its righteousness, and no moral agent can doubt it. All

men know that they have sinned, but all are not convicted of the guilt and ill desert of sin. The many are careless and do not feel the burden of sin, the horrors and terrors of remorse, and have not a sense of condemnation and of being lost.

8. But without this they cannot understand or appreciate the Gospel method of salvation. One cannot intelligently and heartily ask or accept a pardon until he sees and feels the fact and justice of his condemnation.

9. It is absurd to suppose that a careless, unconvicted sinner can intelligently and thankfully accept the Gospel offer of pardon until he accepts the righteousness of God in his condemnation. Conversion to Christ is an intelligent change. Hence the conviction of ill desert must precede the acceptance of mercy; for without this conviction the soul does not understand its need of mercy. Of course, the offer is rejected. The Gospel is no glad tidings to the careless, unconvicted sinner.

10. The spirituality of the law should be unsparingly applied to the conscience until the sinner's self-righteousness is annihilated, and he stands speechless and self-condemned before a holy God.

11. In some men this conviction is already ripe, and

the preacher may at once present Christ, with the hope of His being accepted; but at ordinary times such cases are exceptional. The great mass of sinners are careless, unconvicted, and to assume their conviction and preparedness to receive Christ, and, hence, to urge sinners immediately to accept Him, is to begin at the wrong end of our work--to render our teaching unintelligible. And such a course will be found to have been a mistaken one, whatever present appearances and professions may indicate. The sinner may obtain a hope under such teaching; but, unless the Holy Spirit supplies something which the preacher has failed to do, it will be found to be a false one. All the essential links of truth must be supplied.

12. When the law has done its work, annihilated self-righteousness, and shut the sinner up to the acceptance of mercy, he should be made to understand the delicacy and danger of dispensing with the execution of the penalty when the precept of law has been violated.

13. Right here the sinner should be made to understand that from the benevolence of God he cannot justly infer that God can consistently forgive him. For unless public justice can be satisfied, the law of universal benevolence forbids the forgiveness

of sin. If public justice is not regarded in the exercise of mercy, the good of the public is sacrificed to that of the individual. God will never do this. This teaching will shut the sinner up to look for some offering to public justice.

14. Now give him the atonement as a revealed fact, and shut him up to Christ as his own sin offering. Press the revealed fact that God has accepted the death of Christ as a substitute for the sinner's death, and that this is to be received upon the testimony of God.

15. Being already crushed into contrition by the convicting power of the law, the revelation of the love of God manifested in the death of Christ will naturally beget great self-loathing, and that godly sorrow that needeth not to be repented of. Under this showing the sinner can never forgive himself. God is holy and glorious; and he is a sinner, saved by sovereign grace. This teaching may be more or less formal as the souls you address are more or less thoughtful, intelligent, and careful to understand.

16. It was not by accident that the dispensation of law preceded the dispensation of grace; but it is in the natural order of things, in accordance with established mental laws, and evermore the law

must prepare the way for the Gospel. To overlook this in instructing souls is almost certain to result in false hope, the introduction of a false standard of Christian experience, and to fill the Church with spurious converts. Time will make this plain.

17. The truth should be preached to the persons present, and so personally applied as to compel everyone to feel that you mean him or her. As has been often said of a certain preacher: "He does not preach, but explains what other people preach, and seems to be talking directly to me."

This course will rivet attention, and cause your hearers to lose sight of the length of your sermon. They will tire if they feel no personal interest in what you say. To secure their individual interest in what you are saying is an indispensable condition of their being converted. And, while their individual interest is thus awakened, and held fast to your subject, they will seldom complain of the length of your sermon. In nearly all cases, if the people complain of the length of our sermons, it is because we fail to interest them personally in what we say.

If we fail to interest them personally, it is either because we do not address them personally, or because we lack unction and earnestness, or because we lack clearness and force, or certainly

because we lack something that we ought to possess. To make them feel that we and that God mean them, is indispensable.

18. Do not think that earnest piety alone can make you successful in winning souls. This is only one condition of success. There must be common sense, there must be spiritual wisdom in adapting means to the end. Matter and manner and order and time and place all need to be wisely adjusted to the end we have in view.

God may sometimes convert souls by men who are not spiritually minded, when they possess that natural sagacity which enables them to adapt means to that end; the Bible warrants us in affirming that these are exceptional cases. But without this sagacity and adaptation of means to this end a spiritual mind will fail to win souls to Christ.

19. Souls need instruction in accordance with the measure of their intelligence. A few simple truths, when wisely applied and illuminated by the Holy Ghost, will convert children to Christ. I say wisely applied, for they too are sinners, and need the application of the law, as a schoolmaster, to bring them to Christ, that they maybe justified by faith. It will sooner or later appear that supposed conversions to Christ are spurious where the

preparatory law work has been omitted, and Christ has not been embraced as a Savior from sin and condemnation.

Sinners of education and culture, who are, after all unconvicted and skeptical in their hearts, need a vastly more extended and thorough application of truth. Professional men need the Gospel net to be thrown quite around them, with no break through which they can escape; and, when thus dealt with, they are all the more sure to be converted in proportion to their real intelligence. I have found that a course of lectures addressed to lawyers, and adapted to their habits of thought and reasoning, is most sure to convert them.

20. To be successful in winning souls, we need to be observing--to study individual character, to press the facts of experience, observation, and revelation upon the consciences of all classes.

21. Be sure to explain the terms you use. Before I was converted, I failed to hear the terms repentance, faith, regeneration, and conversion intelligibly explained. Repentance was described as a feeling. Faith was represented as an intellectual act or state, and not as a voluntary act of trust. Regeneration was represented as some physical change in the nature, produced by the direct power

of the Holy Ghost, instead of a voluntary change of the ultimate preference of the soul, produced by the spiritual illumination of the Holy Ghost. Even conversion was represented as being the work of the Holy Ghost in such a sense as to cover up the fact that it is the sinner's own act, under the persuasions of the Holy Ghost.

22. Urge the fact that repentance involves the voluntary and actual renunciation of all sin; that it is a radical change of mind toward God. Also the fact that saving faith is heart trust in Christ; that it works by love, it purifies the heart, and overcomes the world; that no faith is saving that has not these attributes.

The sinner is required to put forth certain mental acts. What these are he needs to understand. Error in mental philosophy but embarrasses, and may fatally deceive the inquiring soul. Sinners are often put upon a wrong track. They are put upon a strain to feel instead of putting forth the required acts of will. Before my conversion I never received from man any intelligible idea of the mental acts that God required of me.

The deceitfulness of sin renders the inquiring soul exceedingly exposed to delusion; therefore it behooves teachers to beat about every bush, and to

search out every nook and corner where a soul can find a false refuge. Be so thorough and discriminating as to render it as nearly impossible as the nature of the case will admit that the inquirer should entertain a false hope.

23. Do not fear to be thorough. Do not through false pity put on a plaster where the probe is needed. Do not fear that you shall discourage the convicted sinner, and turn him back, by searching him out to the bottom. If the Holy Spirit is dealing with him, the more you search and probe the more impossible it will be for the soul to turn back or rest in sin.

If you would save the soul, do not spare a right hand, or right eye, or any darling idol; but see to it that every form of sin is given up. Insist upon full confession of wrong to all that have a right to confession. Insist upon full restitution, so far as is possible, to all injured parties. Do not fall short of the express teachings of Christ on this subject. Whoever the sinner may be, let him distinctly understand that unless he forsakes all that he has he cannot be the disciple of Christ. Insist upon entire and universal consecration of all powers of body and mind, and of all the property, possessions, character, and influence to God. Insist upon the total abandonment to God of all ownership of self, or

anything else, as a condition of being accepted.

Understand yourself, and, if possible, make the sinner understand, that nothing short of this is involved in true faith, or true repentance, and that true consecration involves them all.

24. Keep constantly before the sinner's mind that it is the personal Christ with whom he is dealing, that God in Christ is seeking his reconciliation to Himself, and that the condition of his reconciliation is that he gives up his will and his whole being to God--that he "leaves not a hoof behind."

Assure him that "God has given to him eternal life, and this life is in His Son"; that "Christ is made unto him wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption"; and that from first to last he is to find his whole salvation in Christ.

When satisfied that the soul intelligently receives all this doctrine, and that Christ herein revealed, then remember that he must persevere unto the end, as the further condition of his salvation. Here you have before you the great work of preventing the soul from backsliding, of securing its permanent sanctification and sealing for eternal glory.

25. Does not the very common backsliding in heart of converts indicate some grace defect in the

teachings of the pulpit on this subject? What does it mean that so many hopeful converts, within a few months of their apparent conversion, lose their first love, lose all their fervency in religion, neglect their duty, and live on in the name Christians, but in spirit and life worldlings?

26. A truly successful preacher must not only win souls to Christ, but must keep them won. He must not only secure their conversion, but their permanent sanctification. Nothing in the Bible is more expressly promised in this life than permanent sanctification. 1 Thess. V. 23, 24: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." This is unquestionably a prayer of the apostle for permanent sanctification in this life, with an express promise that He who has called us will do it.

27. We learn from the Scriptures that "after we believe" we are, or may be, sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and that this sealing is the earnest of our salvation. Eph. 1:13, 14: "In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of

promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." This sealing, this earnest of our inheritance, is that which renders our salvation sure. Hence, in Eph. 4:30, the apostle says: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." And in 2 Cor. 1:21 and 22, the apostle says: "Now He which establisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God, who hath also sealed us and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Thus we are established in Christ and anointed by the Spirit, and also sealed by the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. And this, remember, is a blessing that we receive after that we believe, as Paul has informed us in his Epistle to the Ephesians, above quoted. Now, it is of the first importance that converts should be taught not to rest short of this permanent sanctification, this sealing, this being established in Christ by the special anointing of the Holy Ghost.

Now, brethren, unless we know what this means by our own experience, and lead converts to this experience, we fail most lamentably and essentially in our teaching. We leave out the very cream and fullness of the Gospel.

It should be understood that while this experience is

rare amongst ministers, it will be discredited by the churches, and it will be next to impossible for an isolated preacher of this doctrine to overcome the unbelief of his church.

28. Sin consists in carnal-mindedness, in "obeying the desires of the flesh and of the mind." Permanent sanctification consists in entire and permanent consecration to God. It implies the refusal to obey the desires of the flesh or of the mind. The baptism or sealing of the Holy Spirit subdues the power of the desires, and strengthens and confirms the will in resisting the impulse of desire, and in abiding permanently in a state of making the whole being an offering to God.

29. If we are silent upon this subject, the natural inference will be that we do not believe in it, and, of course, that we know nothing about it in experience. This will inevitably be a stumbling-block to the Church. Since this is undeniably an important doctrine, and plainly taught in the Gospel, and is, indeed, the marrow and fatness of the Gospel, to fail in teaching this is to rob the Church of its richest inheritance.

30. The testimony of the Church, as to a great extent of the ministry, on the subject has been lamentably defective. This legacy has been withheld

from the Church, and is it any wonder that she so disgracefully backslides? The testimony of the comparatively few, here and there, that insist upon this doctrine is almost nullified by the counter-testimony or culpable silence of the great mass of Christ's witnesses.

31. No man, saint or sinner, should be left by us to rest or be quiet in the indulgence of any sin. No one should be allowed to entertain the hope of heaven, if we can prevent it, who lives in the indulgence of known sin in any form. Our constant demand and persuasion should be, "Be ye holy, for God is holy." "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Let us remember the manner in which Christ concludes His memorable Sermon on the Mount. After spreading out those awfully searching truths before His hearers, and demanding that they should be perfect, as their Father in heaven was perfect, He concludes by assuring them that no one could be saved who did not receive and obey His teachings. Instead of attempting to please our people in their sins, we should continually endeavour to hunt and persuade them out of their sins. Brethren, let us do it, as we would not have our skirts defiled with their blood. If we pursue this course and constantly preach with unction and

power, and abide in the fullness of the doctrine of Christ, we may joyfully expect to save ourselves and them that hear us.

Chapter VI.
PREACHER SAVE THYSELF.

1. See that you are constrained by love to preach the Gospel, as Christ was to provide a gospel. See that you have the special enduement of power from on high, by the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

2. See that you have a heart, and not merely a head call to undertake the preaching of the Gospel. By this I mean, be heartily and most intensely inclined to seek the salvation of souls as the great work of life, and do not undertake what you have no heart to.

3. Constantly maintain a close walk with God. Make the Bible your books of books. Study it much, upon your knees, waiting for divine light. Beware of leaning on commentaries. Consult them when convenient; but judge for yourself, in the light of the Holy Ghost.

4. Keep yourself pure--in will, in thought, in feeling, in word and action. Contemplate much the guilt and

danger of sinners, that your zeal for their salvation may be intensified. Also deeply ponder and dwell much upon the boundless love and compassion of Christ for them. So love them yourself as to be willing to die for them.

5. Give your most intense thought to the study of ways and means by which you may save them. Make this the great and intense study of your life. Refuse to be diverted from this work. Guard against every temptation that would abate your interest in it. Believe the assertion of Christ that He is with you in this work always and everywhere, to give you all the help you need.

6. "He that winneth souls is wise"; and "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and he shall receive." "But let him ask in faith." Remember, therefore, that you are bound to have the wisdom that shall win souls to Christ. Being called of God to the work, make your calling your constant argument with God for all that you need for the accomplishment of the work.

7. Be diligent and laborious, "in season and out of season." Converse much with all classes of your hearers on the question of their salvation, that you may understand their opinions, errors, and wants.

Ascertain their prejudices, ignorance, temper, habits, and whatever you need to know to adapt your instruction to their necessities.

8. See that your own habits are in all respects correct; that you are temperate in all things--free from the stain or smell of tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or anything of which you have reason to be ashamed, and which may stumble others.

9. Be not "light-minded," but "set the Lord always before you." Bridle your tongue, and be not given to idle and unprofitable conversation. Always let your people see that you are in solemn earnest with them, both in the pulpit and out of it; and let not your daily intercourse with them nullify your serious teaching on the Sabbath.

10. Resolve to "know nothing" among your people "save Jesus Christ and Him crucified"; and let them understand that, as an ambassador of Christ, your business with them relates wholly to the salvation of their souls. Be sure to teach them as well by example as by precept. Practice yourself what you preach.

11. Be especially guarded in your conversation with women, to raise no thought or suspicion of the least impurity in yourself.

12. Guard your weak points. If naturally tending to gaiety and trifling, watch against occasions of failure in this direction. If naturally somber and unsocial, guard against moroseness and unsociability. Avoid all affection and sham in all things. Be what you profess to be, and you will have no temptation to "make believe." Let simplicity, sincerity, and Christian propriety stamp your whole life.

13. Spend much time every day and night in prayer and direct communication with God. This will make you a power for salvation. No amount of learning and study can compensate for the loss of this communion. If you fail to maintain communion with God, you are "weak as another man."

14. Beware of the error that there are no means of regeneration, and, consequently, no connection of means and end in the regeneration of souls. Understand that regeneration is a moral, and therefore a voluntary change. Understand that the Gospel is adapted to change the hearts of men, and in a wise presentation of it you may expect the efficient co-operation of the Holy Spirit.

15. In the selection and treatment of your texts, always secure the direct teaching of the Holy Spirit. Let all your sermons be heart and not merely head sermons. Preach from experience, and not from

hearsay, or mere reading and study.

16. Always present the subject which the Holy Spirit lays upon your heart for the occasion. Seize the points presented by the Holy Spirit to your own mind, and present them with the greatest possible directness to your congregation.

17. Be full of prayer whenever you attempt to preach, and go from your closet to your pulpit with the inward groanings of the Spirit pressing for utterance at your lips.

18. Get your mind fully imbued with your subject, so that it will press for utterance; then open your mouth, and let it forth like a torrent.

19. See that "the fear of man that bringeth a snare" is not upon you. Let your people understand that you fear God too much to be afraid of them. Never let the question of your popularity with your people influence your preaching. Never let the question of salary deter you from "declaring the whole counsel of God, whether men will hear or forbear."

20. Do not temporize, lest you lose the confidence of your people, and thus fail to save them. They cannot thoroughly respect you, as an ambassador of Christ, if they see that you dare not do your duty.

21. Be sure to "commend yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Be "not a lover of filthy lucre." Avoid every appearance of vanity. Compel your people to respect your sincerity and your spiritual wisdom.

22. Do not make the impression that you are fond of good dinners, and like to be invited out to dine; for this will be a snare to you, and a stumbling-block to them. Keep your body under, lest after having preached to others, yourself should be a castaway.

23. "Watch for souls as one who must give an account to God." Be a diligent student, and thoroughly instruct your people in all that is essential to their salvation.

24. Never flatter the rich. Be especially attentive to the wants and instruction of the poor.

25. Suffer not yourself to be bribed into a compromise with sin by donation parties. Suffer not yourself to be publicly treated as a mendicant, or you will come to be despised by a large class of your hearers. Repel every attempt to close your mouth against whatever is extravagant, wrong, or injurious amongst your people.

26. Maintain your pastoral integrity and independence, lest you sear your conscience,

quench the Holy Spirit, forfeit the confidence of your people, and lose the favour of God. Be an example to the flock, and let your life illustrate your teaching. Remember that your actions and spirit will teach even more impressively than your sermons.

27. If you preach that men should offer to God and their neighbour a love service, see that you do this yourself, and avoid all that tends to the belief that you are working for pay. Give to your people a love service, and encourage them to render to you, not a money equivalent for your labour, but a love reward that will refresh both you and them.

28. Repel every proposal to get money for you or for church purposes that will naturally disgust and excite the contempt of worldly but thoughtful men.

29. Resist the introduction of tea-parties, amusing lectures, and dissipating sociables, especially at those seasons most favourable for united efforts to convert souls to Christ. Be sure the devil will try to head you off in this direction. When you are praying and planning for a revival of God's work, some of your worldly church members will invite you to a party. Go not, or you are in for a circle of them and that will defeat your prayers.

Do not be deceived. Your spiritual power with your

people will never be increased by accepting such invitations at such times. If it is a good time to have parties, because the people have leisure, it is also a good time for religious meetings, and your influence should be used to draw the people to the house of God.

30. See that you personally know and daily live upon Christ.

An Easy to Understand Presentation of

The Spiritual Preparation of a Soul Winner

by Charles Finney

[Edited by William Allen]

Chapter I

HOW TO PRAY EFFECTUALLY

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. --Romans 8:26,

There are two kinds of means requisite to promote a revival of religion; the one to influence men, the other to influence God. The truth is employed to influence men, and prayer to move God.

When I speak of moving God, I do not mean that God's mind is changed by prayer, or that His disposition or character is changed. But prayer produces such a change in us, as renders it consistent for God to do what is would not be consistent for Him to do otherwise.

When a sinner repents, that state of feeling makes it proper for God to forgive him. So when Christians, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, offer effectual prayer, their state of feeling render it proper for God to answer them. He was never unwilling to bestow the blessing on the condition that they felt right, and offered the right kind of prayer.

Prayer is an essential link in the chain of causes that lead to a revival; as much so as truth is. Some have zealously used truth to convert men, and laid very little stress on prayer. They have preached, and talked, and distributed tracts with great zeal, and then wondered that they had so little success. The reason was that they forgot to use the other

branch of means--effectual prayer. They overlooked the fact, that truth by itself, will never produce the necessary effect without the Spirit of God.

Sometimes it happens that those who are the most engaged in employing truth are not the most engaged in prayer. This is unfortunate, for unless they--or some others--have the spirit of prayer, the truth, by itself, will do nothing but harden men in impenitence. Probably in the day of judgment it will be found that nothing is ever done by the truth, used ever so zealously, unless there is a spirit of prayer somewhere in connection with the presentation of truth.

Others err on the other side. Not that they lay too much stress on prayer, but they overlook the fact that prayer might be offered forever, by itself, and nothing would be done. Because sinners are not converted by direct contact with the Holy Ghost, but by the truth, employed as a means. To expect the conversion of sinners by prayer alone, without the employment of truth, is to tempt God.

I. WHAT SPIRIT IS SPOKEN OF IN THE TEXT.

Some have supposed that the Spirit spoken of in the text means our own spirit; our own mind. But a little

attention to the text will show plainly that this is not the meaning. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities" would then read: "Our own spirit helpeth the infirmities of our spirit," and "Our own spirit maketh intercession for our own spirit." You see you can make no sense of it on that supposition.

It is evident from the manner in which the text is introduced, that the Spirit referred to is the Holy Ghost. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Rom. 8:13-16. And the text is plainly speaking of the same Spirit.

II. WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES.

He intercedes for the saints. "He maketh intercession for us," and "helpeth our infirmities." When "we know not what to pray for as we ought," He helps us to pray "according to the will of God," or for the things that God desires us to pray for.

III. WHY IS THE HOLY SPIRIT THUS EMPLOYED?

Because we know not what we should pray for as we ought. We are so ignorant both of the will of God revealed in the Bible, and of His unrevealed will which we ought to learn from His Providence. Mankind are vastly ignorant both of the promises and prophecies of the Bible, and blind to the Providence of God; and they are still more in the dark about those things of which God has said nothing but by the teachings of His Spirit. When all other means fail of leading us to the knowledge of what we ought to pray for, the Holy Spirit does it.

IV. HOW DOES HE MAKE INTERCESSION FOR THE SAINTS?

1. Not by superseding the use of our faculties. It is not by praying for us, while we do nothing. He prays for us by exciting our own faculties. Not that He immediately suggests the words to pray, or guides our language; but He enlightens our minds, and makes the truth take hold of our souls. He leads us to consider the state of the Church and the condition of sinners around us.

The manner in which He brings the truth before the mind, and keeps it there until it produces its effect, we cannot tell. But we can know as much as this--

that He leads us to a deep consideration of the state of things; and the natural result of this is deep feeling. When the Spirit brings the truth before a man's mind, there is only one way in which he can keep from feeling deeply, and that is by turning away his thoughts, and leading his mind to think of other things.

Sinners, when the Spirit of God brings the truth before them, must feel deeply. They feel wrong as long as they remain impenitent. So, if a man is a Christian, and the Holy Spirit brings these subjects into warm contact with his heart, it is just as impossible he should not feel deeply, as it is that your hand should not feel if you put it into the fire. If the Spirit of God leads a Christian to dwell on things calculated to excite warm and overpowering feelings, and he if not affected by them, it proves that he has no love for souls, has nothing of the love of Christ, and knows nothing about Christian experience.

2. The Spirit makes Christians feel the value of souls, and the guilt and danger of sinners in their present condition. It is amazing how dark and stupid Christians often are about this. Even Christian parents let their children go right down to hell before their eyes, and scarcely seem to have a single

feeling, or put forth an effort to save them. And why? Because they are so blind to what hell is, so unbelieving about the Bible, so ignorant of the precious promises which God has made to faithful parents. They grieve the Spirit of God away, and it is vain to make them pray for their children, while the Spirit of God is away from them.

3. He leads Christians to understand and apply the promises of the Bible. It is wonderful that in no age have Christians been able fully to apply the promises of Scriptures to the events of life, as they go along. This is not because the promises themselves are obscure. The promises are plain enough. But there has always been a disposition to overlook the Scriptures as a source of light respecting the passing events of life.

How astonished the Apostles were at Christ's application of so many prophecies of Himself! They seemed continually ready to exclaim, "Astonishing! Can it be so? We never understood it before." Who that has read the manner in which the Apostles, influenced and inspired by the Holy Ghost, applied passages of the Old Testament to New Testament times, has not been amazed at the richness of meaning which they found in the Scriptures? So it has been with many a Christian; while deeply

engaged in prayer, he has seen that passages of Scriptures are appropriate which he never thought of before as having any such application.

I once knew an individual who was in great spiritual darkness. He had retired for prayer, resolving that he would not desist until he had got right with God. He kneeled down and tried to pray; but all was dark and he could not pray. He then arose from his knees and stood for a time; but he could not give up, for he had promised that he would not let the sun go down before he had given himself to God.

He knelt again; but all was dark, and his heart was as hard as before. He was nearly in despair, and said in agony, "I have grieved the Spirit of God away, and there is no promise for me. I am shut out of the presence of God." But his resolution was formed not to give up, and again he knelt down. He had said but a few words when this passage came into his mind, as fresh as if he had just read it, "Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart." Jer. 29:13. He saw that though this promise was in the Old Testament, and addressed to the Jews, it was still as applicable to him as to them. It broke his heart like the hammer of the Lord, in a moment. Then he prayed freely and rose up happy in God.

Thus it often happens when professors of religion are praying for their children. Sometimes they pray, and are in darkness and doubt, feeling as if there were no foundation for faith, and no special promise for the children of believers. But while they have been pleading, God has shown them the full meaning of some promise, and their soul has rested on it as on the mighty arm of God.

I once heard of a widow who was greatly exercised about her children, until this passage was brought powerfully to her mind: "Thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in Me." Jer. 49:11. She saw it had an extended meaning, and she was enabled to lay hold on it; and then she prevailed in prayer, and her children were converted.

The Holy Spirit was sent into the world by the Saviour, to guide His people and instruct them, and bring things to their remembrance, as well as to convince the world of sin.

4. The Holy Spirit leads Christians to desire and pray for things of which nothing is specifically said in the Word of God. Take the case of an individual. That God is willing to save is a general truth. So it is a general truth that He is willing to answer prayer. But how shall I find the will of God respecting that

individual, whether I can pray in faith according to the will of God for the conversion and salvation of that individual, or not?

Here the agency of the Holy Spirit comes in, to lead the minds of God's people to pray for those individuals, and at those times, when God is prepared to bless them. When we know not what to pray for, the Holy Spirit leads the mind to dwell on some object, to consider its situation, to realize its value, and to feel for it, and to pray and travail in birth, until the person is converted. This sort of experience, I know, is less common in cities than it is in some parts of the country, because of the infinite number of things in cities to divert the attention, and grieve the Holy Spirit. I have had much opportunity to know how it has been in some places.

I was acquainted with an individual who used to keep a list of persons that he was especially concerned for; and I have had the opportunity to know a multitude of persons for whom he became thus interested, and who were immediately converted. I have seen him pray for persons on his list, when he was literally in an agony for them; and have sometimes known him call on some other person to help him pray in such a case. I have

known his mind to fasten thus on an individual of hardened, abandoned character, and who could not be reached in any ordinary way.

In a town in a northern part of this state, where there was a revival, there was a certain individual who was a most violent and outrageous opposer. He kept a tavern, and used to delight in swearing at a desperate rate whenever there were Christians within hearing, on purpose to hurt their feelings. He was so bad, that one man said he believed that he would have to sell his place, or give it away, and move out of town, for he could not live near a man who swore so.

This good man that I was speaking of, was passing through the town one day, and heard of the case, and was very much grieved and distressed for the individual. He took him on his prayer list. The case weighed on his mind when he was asleep and when he was awake. He kept thinking about him and praying for him for days. And the first we knew of it, this ungodly man came into a meeting, and got up and confessed his sins, and poured out his soul to God. His bar-room immediately became the place where they held prayer meetings.

In this manner the Spirit of God leads individual Christians to pray for things which they would not

pray for, unless they were led by Him. And thus they pray for things, "according to the will of God." If God leads a man to pray for an individual, the inference from the Bible is, that God designs to save that person. If we find by comparing our state of mind with the Bible, that we are led by the Spirit to pray for an individual, we have good evidence to believe that God is prepared to bless him.

5. By giving to Christians a spiritual discernment respecting the movements and developments of Providence. Devoted, praying Christians, often see these things so clearly, and look so far ahead, as greatly to stumble others. They sometimes almost seem to prophesy.

No doubt, persons may be deluded, and sometimes are, by leaning to their own understanding when they think they are led by the Spirit. But there is no doubt that a Christian may be made to see and discern clearly the signs of the times, so as to understand by providence, what to expect, and thus to pray for it in faith, when no one else can see the least sign of it. Thus they are often led to expect a revival, and pray for it in faith, and later events proved that they were truly led by the Spirit of God.

There was a woman in New Jersey, in a place where there had been a revival. She was very

positive that there was going to be another. She insisted upon it that they had had the former rain and were now going to have the latter rain. She wanted to have special meetings appointed. But the minister and elders saw nothing to encourage it, and would do nothing. She saw that they were blind and so she went forward, and got a carpenter to make seats for her, for she said she would have meetings in her own house, for there was certainly going to be a revival.

She had scarcely opened her doors for meetings, before the Spirit of God came down in great power. Then those sleepy church members found themselves surrounded all at once with convicted sinners. And they could only say, "The Lord is in this place, and we knew it not."

The reason why such persons understand the indications of Providence, is not because of the superior wisdom that is in them, but because the Spirit of God leads them to see the signs of the times. And this, not by revelation, but they are led to see that converging of providences to a single point, which produces in them a confident expectation of a certain result.

V. TO WHAT DEGREE MAY WE EXPECT THE SPIRIT OF GOD TO INFLUENCE THE MINDS OF CHRISTIANS?

The text says, "The Spirit maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered." The meaning of this I understand to be, that the Spirit excites desires too great to be expressed except by groans. Something that language cannot utter--making the soul too full to utter its feelings by words, where the person can only groan them out to God, who understands the language of the heart.

VI. HOW WE CAN KNOW THE SPIRIT'S INFLUENCES.

1. Not by feeling that some external influence or agency is applied to us. We are not to expect to feel our minds in direct physical contact with God. If such a thing can be, we know of no way in which it can be made sensible. We know that we exercise our minds freely, and that our thoughts are exercised on something that excites our feelings. But we are not to expect a miracle to be wrought, as if we were led by the hand, sensibly, or like something whispered in our ear, or any miraculous manifestation of the will of God.

Christians often grieve the Spirit away, because they

do not honour Him and cherish His influences. Sinners often do this ignorantly. They suppose that if they were under conviction of sin by the Spirit, they would have such and such a mysterious feeling; that a shock would come upon them which they could not mistake. Many Christians are so ignorant of the Spirit's influences and have thought so little about having His assistance in prayer, that when they have His influences they do not know it, and so do not cherish and yield to them, and preserve them.

We are sensible of nothing, when we pray in the Spirit, only the movement of our own minds. There is nothing else that can be felt. We are merely sensible that our thoughts are intensely employed on a certain subject.

Christians are often unnecessarily misled and distressed on this point, for fear they have not the Spirit of God. They feel intensely, but they do not know what makes them feel so. They are distressed about sinners; but should they not be distressed, when they think of their condition? They keep thinking about them all the time, and how can they avoid being distressed?

Now, the truth is, the very fact that you are thinking upon them is evidence that the Spirit of God is influencing you. Do you know that the greater part of

the time these things do not affect you so? The greater part of the time you do not think much about the case of sinners. You know their salvation is always equally important. But at other times, even when you are quite at leisure, your mind is entirely dark, and vacant of any feeling for them.

But now, although you may be busy about other things, you think, you pray, and feel intensely for them, even while you are about business that at other times would occupy all your thoughts. Now almost every thought you have is, "God have mercy upon them." Why is this? Why, their case is placed in such a strong light before your mind. Do you ask what it is that leads your mind to exercise these benevolent feelings for sinners, and to agonize in prayer for them? It is the Spirit of God. There are no devils that would lead you so. If your feelings are truly benevolent, you are to consider it as the Holy Spirit leading you to pray for things according to the will of God.

2. Try the spirits by the Bible. People are sometimes led away by strange fantasies and crazy impulses. If you compare them faithfully with the Bible, you need never be led astray. You can always know whether your feelings are produced by the Spirit's influences, by comparing your desires with the spirit and temper

of the Bible. The Bible commands you to try the spirits whether they be of God.

VII. HOW TO OBTAIN THE INFLUENCES OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

1. They must be sought by fervent believing prayer. Jesus said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11:13. Does any one say, "I have prayed for His influences, and they do not come"? It is because you do not pray aright. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." James 4:3. You do not pray from right motives.

A professor of religion, and a principal member in a church, once asked a minister what he thought of his case; he had been praying week after week for the Holy Spirit, and had not found any benefit. The minister asked what his motive was in praying. He said he wanted to be happy, as he knew those who had the Spirit were happy. The minister showed him that the devil himself might pray so. That it was mere selfishness. The man turned away in anger. He saw that he had never known what it was to pray. He was convinced that he was a hypocrite,

and that his prayers were all selfish, dictated only by a desire for his own happiness.

David prayed that God would uphold him by His free Spirit, that he might teach transgressors, and turn sinners to God. A Christian should pray for the Holy Spirit, that he may be more useful and glorify God more; not that he himself may be more happy. This man saw clearly where he had been in error, and he was converted. You ought to examine and see if your prayers are not tinctured with selfishness.

2. Use the means adapted to stir up your minds on this subject, and to keep your attention fixed there. If a man prays for the Holy Spirit and then diverts his mind to other objects, he tempts God; he swings loose from his object, and it would be a miracle if he should get what he prays for.

How is a sinner convicted? Why, by thinking of his sins. That is the way for a Christian to obtain deep feeling; by thinking on the appropriate object. God is not going to pour these things on you, without any effort on your own. You must cherish the slightest impressions.

Take the Bible, and go over the passages that show the condition and prospects of the world. Look at the world, look at your children, and your neighbours,

and see their condition while they remain in sin, and persevere in prayer and effort until you obtain the blessing of the Spirit of God to dwell in you. This was the way, doubtless, that Dr. Watts came to have the feelings which he described in the words of the hymn: --

My thoughts on awful subjects dwell,
Damnation and the dead;

What horrors seize the guilty soul

Upon a dying bed!

Look, at it were, through a telescope that will bring these objects up near to you; look into hell, and hear them groan; then turn the glass upward and look into heaven, and see the saints there, in their white robes, with their harps in their hands, and hear them singing the song of redeeming love; and ask yourself--Is it possible, that I should prevail with God to elevate the sinner there? Do this, and if you are not a wicked man, and a stranger to God, you will soon have as much of the spirit of prayer as your body can sustain.

3. You must watch unto prayer. You must keep a look out, and see if God grants the blessing when

you ask Him. People sometimes pray and never look to see if the prayer is answered. Be careful also, not to grieve the Spirit of God. Confess and forsake your sins. God will never lead you as one of His chosen ones, and let you into His secrets, unless you confess and forsake your sins. Do not be always confessing and never forsaking your sins; but confess and forsake too. Make redress wherever you have committed an injury. You cannot expect to get the spirit of prayer first, and then see to these matters after. You cannot fight in through so. Professors of religion, who are proud and unyielding, and who justify themselves, will never force God to dwell with them. They must yield to God's terms.

4. Aim to obey perfectly the law of God. In others words, have no fellowship with sin. Aim at living entirely above the world; "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matt. 5:48. If you ever sin at all, let it be your daily grief. The man who does not aim at this, means to live in sin. Such a man need not expect God's blessing, for he is not sincere in desiring to keep all His commandments.

5. Pray in the name of Jesus. You cannot come to God in your own name. You cannot plead your own

merits. But you can come in a Name that is always acceptable. You know what it is to use the name of a man. If you should go to the bank with a draft or note, endorsed by a millionaire, that would be giving you his name, and you know you could get the money from the bank just as well as he could himself. Now, Jesus gives you the use of His name, and when you pray in the name of Jesus the meaning of it is, that you can prevail just as well as He could Himself, if He were to pray for the same things.

VIII. FOR WHOM DOES THE SPIRIT INTERCEDE?

"He maketh intercession for the saints," for all saints, for any who are saints.

REMARKS

Why is it that so little stress is laid on the influences of the Holy Spirit in prayer? Many lay great stress on the Spirit's influence in converting sinners. But how little is said, how little is printed, about His influences in prayer! How little complaining that people do not make enough of the Spirit's influences in leading Christians to pray according to the will of God!

Let it never be forgotten that no Christian ever prays aright, unless he is led by the Spirit. He has natural power to pray, and so far as the will of God is revealed, he is able to do it; but he never does so effectually, unless the Spirit of God influences him. Just as sinners are able to repent, but never do, unless influenced by the Spirit.

This subject lays open the foundation of the difficulty felt by many persons on the subject of the Prayer of Faith. They object to the idea that faith in prayer is a belief that we shall receive the very thing for which we ask; and insist that there can be no foundation or evidence upon which to rest such a belief. In a sermon published a few years ago on this subject, the writer brings forward this difficulty.

"I have," says he, "no evidence that the thing prayed for will be granted, until I have prayed in faith; because, praying in faith is the condition upon which it is promised. And, of course, I cannot claim the promise until I have fulfilled the condition.

Now, if the condition is, that I am to believe I shall receive the very blessing for which I ask, it is evident that the promise is given upon the performance of an impossible condition, and is of course, a mere nullity. The promise would amount to just this: You shall have whatsoever you ask, upon

the condition that you first believe that you shall receive it. Now, I must fulfill the condition before I can claim the promise. But I can have no evidence that I shall receive it, until I believed that I shall receive it. This reduces me to the necessity of believing that I shall receive it, before I have any evidence that I shall receive it--which is impossible."

The whole force of this objection arises out of the fact, that the Spirit's influences are entirely overlooked, which He exerts in leading an individual to the exercise of faith; and that faith which is produced only by the operation of God, is also left out of the question. The fact is, that the Spirit of God can give evidence, on which to believe that any particular blessing will be granted. He can lead the mind to a firm reliance upon God, and trust that the blessings sought will be obtained.

The influences of the Holy Spirit are not miraculous. Praying is the same thing whether you pray for the conversion of a soul, or for a miracle. Faith is the same thing in the once case as in the other; it only terminates on a different object; in the one case on the conversion of a soul, and in the other on the performance of a miracle.

Nor is faith exercised in the one more than in the other, without reference to a promise. A general

promise may with the same propriety, be applied to the conversion of a soul, as to the performance of a miracle. And it is equally true in the one case as in the other, that no man ever prays in faith without being influenced by the Spirit of God. If the Spirit could lead the mind of an apostle to exercise faith in regard to a miracle, He can lead the mind of a Christian to exercise faith in regard to receiving any other blessing, by a reference to the same general promise.

Should anyone ask, "When are we under obligation to believe that we shall receive the blessing for which we ask?" I answer: --

(a) When there is a particular promise specifying the particular blessing: as when we pray for the Holy Spirit. He is particularly named in the promise, Luke 11:13, and here we have evidence and are bound to believe, whether we have any Divine influence or not: just as sinners are bound to repent whether the Spirit strives with them or not. Their obligation rests not upon the Spirit's influences, but upon their ability to do their duty. And while it is true that not one of them ever will repent without the influences of the Spirit, still they have the power to do so, and are under obligation to do so, whether the Spirit strives with them or not. So with the Christian, he is bound

to believe where he has evidence. And although he never does believe, even where he has an express promise, without the aid of the Spirit of God, yet this obligation to do so rests upon his ability, and not upon the Divine influence.

(b) Where God makes a revelation by His Providence, we are bound to believe in proportion to the clearness of the providential indication.

(c) Where there is a prophecy, we are also bound to believe. But in neither of these cases do we, in fact, believe, without the Spirit of God.

But where there is neither promise, providence, nor prophecy, on which we can repose our faith, we are under no obligation to believe, unless, as I have shown in this discourse, the Spirit gives us evidence, by creating desires, and by leading us to pray for a particular object.

In the case of those promises of a general nature, where we are honestly at a loss to know in what particular cases to apply them, it may be considered rather as our privilege than as our duty, in many instances, to apply them to particular cases; but whenever the Spirit of God leads us to apply them to a particular object, then it becomes our duty to apply them. In this case, God explains His own

promise, and shows how He designed it should be applied. Then our obligation to make this application, and to believe in reference to this particular object, remains in full force.

Some have supposed that Paul prayed in faith for the removal of the "thorn in the flesh," and that it was not granted. But they cannot prove that Paul prayed in faith. He had neither promise, nor prophecy, nor providence, nor the Spirit of God, to lead him to believe. The Spirit of God would not lead him to pray for that which was not according to the will of God.

I have dwelt the more upon this subject, because I want to have it made so plain, that you will all be careful not to grieve the Holy Spirit. I want you to have high ideas of Him, and to feel that no good will be done without His influences. That no praying or preaching will be of any avail without Him. Even if Jesus were to come down here and preach to sinners, not one would be converted without the influences of the Holy Spirit. Be careful then not to grieve Him away, by slighting or neglecting His heavenly influences when He invites you to pray.

In praying for an object, it is necessary to persevere until you obtain it. Oh, with what eagerness Christians sometimes pursue a sinner in their

prayers, when the Spirit of God has fixed their desires upon him! No miser pursues his gold with so fixed a determination.

The fear of being led by influences and impulses has done great injury, because it has not been duly considered. A person's mind may be led by an evil influence; but we do wrong, if we let the fear of impulses lead us to resist the good impulses of the Holy Ghost. No wonder Christians have not the spirit of prayer if they are unwilling to take the trouble to distinguish between the holy influences of the Spirit of God, and selfish or evil impulses.

A great deal has been said about fanaticism that is very unguarded, and that has caused many minds to reject the leadings of the Spirit of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. 8:14. And it is our duty to "try the spirits whether they are of God." 1 John 4:1. We should insist on a close scrutiny, and an accurate discrimination. There must be such a thing as being led by the Holy Spirit. And when we are convinced that we are being led of God, we should be sure to follow with full confidence that He will not lead us wrong.

We see from this subject the absurdity of using forms of prayer. The very idea of using a form

rejects, of course, the leadings of the Spirit. Nothing is more calculated to destroy the spirit of prayer, and entirely to darken and confuse the mind, as to what constitutes prayer, than to use set forms. Forms of prayer are not only absurd in themselves, but they are the very devise of the devil to destroy the spirit and break the power of prayer.

It is of no use to say the form is a good one. Prayer does not consist in words; and it matters not what the words are, if the heart is not led by the Spirit of God. If the desire is not kindled, the thoughts directed, and the whole current of feeling produced and led by the Spirit of God, it is not prayer. And set forms are, of all things, best calculated to keep an individual from praying as he ought.

This subject furnishes a test of character. The Spirit maketh intercession for whom? For the saints. Those who are saints are thus exercised. If you are saints you know by experience what it is to be thus exercised, or if not it is because you have grieved the Spirit of God, so that He will not lead you. You live in such a manner that this Holy Comforter will not dwell with you, nor give you the spirit of prayer.

If this is so, you must repent. Whether you are a Christian or not, do not stop to settle that, but repent, as if you never had repented. Do your first

works. Do not take it for granted that you are a Christian, but go, like a humble sinner, and pour out your heart unto the Lord. You can never have the spirit of prayer in any other way.

It is important to understand the subject of prayer:

(a) In order to be useful. Without the spirit of prayer there can be no such sympathy between you and God, that you can either walk with God or work with God. You need to have a strong beating of your heart with His, or you cannot expect to be greatly useful.

(b) As important to your sanctification. Without such a spirit you will not be sanctified, you will not understand the Bible, you will not know how to apply it in your case. I want you to feel the importance of having God with you all the time. If you live as you ought, He says He will come unto you, and make His abode with you, and sup with you, and you with Him.

If people know not the spirit of prayer, they are very apt to be unbelieving in regard to the results of prayer. They do not see what takes place, or do not see the connection, or do not see the evidence. They are not expecting spiritual blessings. When sinners are convicted, they think they are only

frightened by such terrible preaching. And when people are converted, they feel no confidence, and only say, "We will see how they turn out."

Those who have the spirit of prayer know when the blessing comes. It was just so when Christ appeared. Those ungodly doctors of the law did not know Him. Why? Because they were not praying for the redemption of Israel. But Simeon and Anna knew Him. How was that? Mark what they said, how they prayed, and how they lived. They were praying in faith, and so they were not surprised when He came. So it is with such Christians. If sinners are convicted and converted, they are not surprised at it. They are expecting just such things. They know God when He comes, because they are looking out for His visits.

There are three classes of persons in the Church who are liable to error, or have left the truth out of view, on the subject.

(a) Those who place great reliance on prayer in seeking to promote a revival, and use no other means. They are alarmed at any special means of spreading the Gospel, and talk about your "getting up a revival."

(b) Over against these there are those who use

means, and pray, but never think about the influences of the Spirit in prayer. They talk about prayer for the Spirit, and feel the importance of the influences of the Spirit in the conversion of sinners, but do not realize the importance of the Spirit in prayer. Their prayers are all cold talk, nothing that anybody can feel, or that can take hold of God.

(c) Those who have certain strange notions about the sovereignty of God, and who are waiting for God to convert the world without prayer or the preaching of the Gospel.

There must be in the Church a deeper sense of the need of the spirit of prayer. The fact is, that, generally, those who use means most assiduously, and make the most strenuous efforts for the salvation of men, and who have the most correct notions of the manner in which means should be used for converting sinners, also pray most for the Spirit of God and wrestle most with God for His blessing. And what is the result? Let facts speak, and say whether these persons do or do not pray, and whether the Spirit of God does not testify to their prayers, and follow their labours with His power.

A spirit very different from the spirit of prayer appears to prevail in the majority of the churches.

Nothing will produce an excitement and opposition so quickly as the spirit of prayer. If any person should feel burdened with the case of sinners, in prayer, so as to groan in his prayer, why, the women are nervous, and he is visited at once with rebuke and opposition.

From my soul I abhor all affectation of feeling where there is none, and all attempts to work one's self up into feeling by groans. But I feel bound to defend the position, that there is such a thing as being in a state of mind in which there is but one way to keep from groaning, and that is by resisting the Holy Ghost.

I was once present when this subject was discussed. It was said that groaning ought to be discountenanced. The question was asked whether God could produce such a state of feeling in a Christian, that to abstain from groaning would be impossible. And the answer was, "Yes, but He never does." If that be true the Apostle Paul was greatly deceived when he wrote about groanings that cannot be uttered: Jonathan Edwards was deceived when he wrote his book on revivals, and revivals are all in the dark.

Now, no man who reviews the history of the Church will adopt such a sentiment. I do not like this attempt

to shut out, or stifle, or keep down, or limit, the spirit of prayer. I would sooner cut off my right hand than rebuke the spirit of prayer, as I have heard of its being done by saying, "Don't let me hear any more groaning."

I should like to discuss this subject for a month, until the whole Church could understand it, so as to pray the prayer of faith. Beloved, I want to ask you, will you give yourselves up to prayer and live so as to have the spirit of prayer, and have the Holy Spirit with you all the time? Oh, for a praying church!

I once knew a minister who had a revival fourteen winters in succession. I did not know how to account for it, until I saw one of his church members get up in a prayer meeting and make a confession. "Brethren," said he, "I have been long in the habit of praying every Saturday night until after midnight, for the descent of the Holy Ghost among us. And now, brethren," and he began to weep, "I confess that I have neglected for two or three weeks." The secret was out: that minister had a praying church.

Brethren, in my present state of health, I find it impossible to pray as much as I have been in the habit of doing, and at the same time continue to preach. It overcomes my strength. Now, shall I give myself up to pray and stop preaching? That will not

do. Now, will not you, who are in health, throw yourselves into this work, and bear this burden, and lay yourselves out in prayer, until God will pour out His blessing upon us?

Chapter II
POWER FROM ON HIGH

I. WHAT IS IT

The apostles and brethren on the Day of Pentecost received a powerful baptism of the Holy Ghost, a vast increase of divine illumination. This baptism imparted a great diversity of gifts that were used for the accomplishment of their work. It included the following things. The power of a holy life. The power of a self-sacrificing life. The power of a cross-bearing life. The power of great meekness. The power of a loving enthusiasm in proclaiming the Gospel. The power of teaching. The power of a loving and living faith. The gift of tongues. An increasing of power to work miracles. The gift of inspiration, or the revelation of many truths before unrecognized by them. The power of moral courage to proclaim the Gospel and do the bidding of Christ, whatever it cost them.

In their circumstances all these enduements were

essential to their success; but neither separately nor all together did they constitute that power from on high which Christ promised, and which they manifestly received. That which they manifestly received as the supreme, crowning, and all important means of success, was the power to prevail with both God and man, the power to fasten SAVING IMPRESSIONS upon the minds of men.

This last was doubtless the thing which they understood Christ to promise. He had commissioned the Church to evangelize the world. All that I have named above were only means, which could never secure the end, unless they were vitalized and made effectual by the power of God.

The apostles, doubtless, understood this; and, laying themselves and their all upon the altar, they besieged the Throne of Grace in the spirit of entire consecration of their work.

They did in fact receive the gifts above mentioned; but supremely and principally this power to savingly impress men. It was manifested upon the spot. They began to address the multitude; and wonderful to tell, three thousand were converted the same hour. But, observe, there was no new power manifested by them upon this occasion, save the gifts of tongues. They wrought no miracle at that time, and

used these tongues simply as the means of making themselves understood.

Let it be noted that they had not had time to exhibit any other gifts of the Spirit which have been above named. They had not at that time the advantage of exhibiting a holy life, or any of the powerful graces and gifts of the Spirit. What was said on the occasion, as recorded in the book of Acts, could not have made the impression that it did, had it not been uttered by them with a new power to make a saving impression upon the people.

This power was not the power of inspiration, for they only declared certain facts of their own knowledge. It was not the power of human learning and culture, for they had but little. It was not the power of human eloquence, for there appears to have been but little of it. It was God speaking in and through them. It was a power from on high--God in them making a saving impression upon those to whom they spoke.

This power to savingly impress, abode with and upon them. It was, doubtless, the great and main thing promised by Christ, and received by the apostles and early Christians. It has existed to a greater or less extent, in the Church ever since. It is a mysterious fact, often manifested in a most surprising manner. Sometimes a single sentence, a

word, a gesture, or even a look, will convey this power in an overcoming manner.

To the honour of God alone I will relate a little of my own experience in this matter. I was powerfully converted on the morning of the 10th of October, 1821. In the evening of the same day, and on the morning of the following day, I received overwhelming baptisms of the Holy Ghost, that went through me, as it seemed to me, body and soul. I immediately found myself endued with such power from on high that a few words dropped here and there to individuals, were the means of their immediate conversion. My words seemed to fasten like barbed arrows in the souls of men. They cut like a sword. They broke the heart like a hammer. Multitudes can attest to this.

Sometimes I would find myself, in a great measure, empty of this power. I would go out and visit, and find that I had made no saving impression. I would exhort and pray with the same result. I would then set apart a day for private fasting and prayer, fearing that this power had departed from me, and would enquire anxiously after the reason of this apparent emptiness. After humbling myself, and crying out for help, the power would return upon me with all its freshness. This has been the experience of my life.

I could fill a volume with the history of my own experience and observation with respect to this power from on high. It is a fact of consciousness and observation, but a great mystery. I have said that sometimes a look has in it the power of God. I have often witnessed this.

I once preached for the first time in a manufacturing village. The next morning I went into a manufacturing establishment to view its operations. As I passed into the weaving department I beheld a great company of young women, some of whom, I observed were looking at me, and then at each other, in a manner that indicated a trifling spirit, and that they knew me. I, however, knew none of them. As I approached nearer to those who had recognized me they seemed to increase in their manifestations of lightness of mind.

Their levity made a peculiar impression upon me; I felt it to my very heart. I stopped short and looked at them, I know not how, as my whole mind was absorbed with the sense of their guilt and danger. As I settled my countenance upon them I observed that one of them became very agitated. A thread broke. She attempted to mend it; but her hands trembled in such a manner that she could not do it. I immediately observed that the sensation was

spreading, and had become universal among that class of triflers. I looked steadily at them until one after another gave up and paid no more attention to their looms. They fell on their knees, and the influence spread through the whole room. I had not spoken a word; and the noise of the looms would have prevented my being heard if I had. In a few minutes all work was abandoned, and tears and lamentations filled the room.

At this moment the owner of the factory, who was himself an unconverted man, came in, accompanied, I believe, by the superintendent, who was a professed Christians. When the owner saw the state of things he said to the superintendent, "Stop the mill." What he saw seemed to pierce him to the heart. "It is more important," he hurriedly remarked, "that these souls should be saved, than that this mill should run."

As soon as the noise of the machinery had ceased, we had a marvelous meeting. I prayed with them, and gave them such instructions as at the time they could bear. The Word was with power. Many expressed hope that day; and within a few days as I was informed, nearly every hand in that great establishment, together with the owner, had hope in Christ.

This power is a great marvel. I have many times seen people unable to endure the Word. The most simple and ordinary statements would cut men off from their seats like a sword, would take away their bodily strength, and render them almost as helpless as dead men. Several times it has been true in my experience that I could not raise my voice, or say anything in prayer or exhortation except in the mildest manner, without wholly overcoming those who were present. This was not because I was preaching terror to the people; the sweetest sound of the Gospel would overcome them.

This power seems to pervade the atmosphere of one who is highly charged with it. Many times great numbers of persons in a community will be clothed with this power, when the very atmosphere of the whole place seems to be charged with the life of God. Strangers coming into it, and passing through the place, will be instantly struck with conviction of sin, and in many instances converted to Christ.

When Christians humble themselves, and consecrate their all afresh to Christ, and ask for this power, they will often receive such a baptism that they will be instrumental in converting more souls in one day, than in all their lifetime before. While Christians remain humble enough to retain this

power, the work of conversion will go on, until whole communities and regions of country are converted to Christ.

II. THE CONDITIONS OF RECEIVING THIS POWER

Let us borrow a little light from the Scriptures. Before Pentecost the disciples had already been converted to Christ. But conversion to Christ is not to be confounded with consecration to the great work of the world's conversion. When Christ had dispelled their great bewilderment resulting from His crucification, and confirmed their faith by repeated interviews with them, He gave them their great commission to win all nations to Himself. But He admonished them to tarry at Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high, which He said they should receive not many days hence.

Now observe what they did. They assembled, the men and women, for prayer. They accepted the commission, and doubtless, came to an understanding of the nature of the commission, and the necessity of the spiritual enduement which Christ had promised. They must have renounced utterly the idea of living to themselves in any form, and devoted themselves with all their powers to the

work set before them. This consecration of themselves to the work, this self-renunciation, this dying to all that the world could offer them, must, in the order of nature, have preceded their intelligent seeking of the promised enduement of power from on high.

How did they wait? Not in listlessness and inactivity; not in making preparation by study and otherwise to get along without it. They understood that it was to be a baptism of the Holy Ghost. They prayed in faith. They held on until the enduement came.

We, as Christians, have the same commission to fulfill. We have the same promise that they had. They were Christians and had a measure of the Spirit to lead them in prayer and consecration. So have we. Let us, then, not grieve or resist Him; but accept the commission, fully consecrate ourselves, with all we have, to the saving of souls as our great and only life-work. Let us get on the altar with all we have and are, and persist in prayer until we receive the enduement of power.

It is of the utmost importance that all Christians should understand that this commission to convert the world is given to them by Christ individually. Every one has the great responsibility devolved upon him or her, to win as many souls as possible

for Christ. There are a great many departments in this work, but in every department we may or ought to possess this power, that, whether we preach, or pray, or write, or print, or travel, take care of children, or administer the government of the state, or whatever we do, our whole life and influence should be permeated with this power. Jesus said, "He that believeth on Me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The reception of this enduement of power is instantaneous. I do not mean to assert that in every instance the recipient was aware of the precise time at which the power commenced to work mightily within him. It may have commenced like the dew and increased to a shower.

REMARKS

The want of an enduement of power from on high should be deemed a disqualification for a pastor, a deacon or elder, a Sunday School superintendent, a professor in a Christian College, and especially for a professor in a theological seminary. The churches should inform themselves, and look to those seminaries which furnish, not merely the best educated, but the most unctuous and spiritually powerful ministers.

From the time of the apostles to the present day it has been seen that men of very little human culture, but endued with this power, have been highly successful in winning souls to Christ; whilst men of the greatest learning, with all that the schools have done for them, have been powerless so far as the proper work of the ministry is concerned.

Chapter III
THE HOLY SPIRIT'S TEACHING

When He the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. John 16:13

The doctrine of the necessity of Divine teaching, to enlighten and sanctify the minds of men, is abundantly taught in the Bible, and is generally maintained, as a matter of opinion at least, in all orthodox churches.

In discoursing on this subject I will show:

I. HOW FAR THE REASON OF MAN, UNAIDED BY DIVINE ILLUMINATION, IS CAPABLE OF APPREHENDING SPIRITUAL THINGS.

1. The mind of man is capable of understanding the

historical facts of religion, just as it comprehends any other historical facts.

2. The mind of man is capable of understanding the doctrinal propositions of the Gospel; such as the being and character of God, the divine authority and inspiration of the Scriptures, and other fundamental doctrines.

For instance, to enter a little into detail a man by his reason may understand the law of God. He can understand that it requires him to exercise perfect love towards God and all other things.

So likewise, he can see that he is a sinner, and that he cannot be saved by his own works. He has broken God's law, so that the law can never justify him. He can see that if he is ever saved, it will be through mere mercy, by an act of pardon.

II. I WILL SHOW WHEREIN OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE THINGS OF RELIGION IS NECESSARILY DEFECTIVE, WITHOUT THE TEACHING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Knowledge, to avail anything towards effecting its object, must be such as will influence the mind. The will must be controlled. And to do this, the mind must have such a view of things to excite emotion, corresponding to the object in view. Mere intellectual

knowledge will never move the soul to act.

In the case of sinners: to influence sinners to love God, they must have a degree of light such as will powerfully excite the mind, and produce strong emotions. The reason for obedience must be made to appear with great strength and vividness to their minds, so as to subdue their rebellious hearts and bring them voluntarily to obey God. This is effectual knowledge of the Gospel. This men never have, and never can have, without the aid of the Spirit of God. If men were disposed to do right, I know not how far their knowledge, attainable by unaided reason, might avail. But, as they are universally and totally indisposed to obey God, this knowledge will never do it. I will mention some of the reasons:

1. All the knowledge we can have of spiritual things, is by analogy or comparison. Our minds are here shut up in the body, and we derive all our ideas from external objects, through the senses.

It is easily seen that all the ideas concerning spiritual things, conveyed to our minds in this way, must be extremely imperfect, and that we do not, after all, get the true idea in our minds. The Jewish types were probably the most forcible means which God could then use, for giving to the Jews a correct idea of the Gospel.

Yet, it is manifest that the ideas that were communicated in this way were extremely imperfect; and that, without divine illumination to make them see the reality more fully than they could by unaided reason, they never would have got any effectual knowledge of the plan of redemption in this way.

So, when we find in the Bible descriptions of heaven and hell, or anything in the invisible world, it is plain that from words we can get no true ideas at all adequate to the reality.

2. The wickedness of our hearts is so great, as to pervert our judgment, and shut out from our minds much that we might understand of the things of religion.

3. Prejudice is a great obstacle to the reception of correct knowledge concerning religion. The general truth is this: without divine illumination men can understand from the Bible enough to convict and condemn them, but not enough to sanctify and save them.

III. THE SPIRIT OF GOD ALONE CAN GIVE US THIS ILLUMINATION.

Jesus told His apostles, "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if it go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you." The word here translated

Comforter, properly means a helper or teacher. "When He is come He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment because the prince of this world is judged."

Again He said, "The Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 14:26. Here you see the office of the Spirit of God is to instruct mankind in regard to the things of religion.

THE MANNER in which the Spirit of God does this, is what we can never know in this world. But the fact is undeniable, that He can reach the mind without the use of words, and can put our minds in possession of the ideas themselves, of which the types, or figures, or words of the human teacher, are only the signs or imperfect representatives.

What Christian does not know this, as a matter of fact? What Christian does not know, from his own experience, that the Spirit of God does lead him instantly to see something in a passage of Scripture, which all his study, and effort of mind to know the

meaning of, could never have given him.

IV. DIVINE TEACHING MAY BE HAD BY ALL MEN FREELY UNDER THE GOSPEL.

Jesus said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" Luke 11:9, 13. "All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22

V. I WILL SHOW THE REASONS WHY SOME DO NOT HAVE AS MUCH DIVINE ILLUMINATION AS THEY NEED.

1. They do not ask for it in such a manner or degree as they need it.

2. They ask amiss, or from selfish motives. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." James 4:3

3. They do not use the proper means to attain what they ask. Suppose a person neglects his Bible, and yet asks God to give him a deep knowledge of the things of religion: that is tempting God.

4. Another reason is, that they DEPEND on the instructions and means, as if they were effectual

without divine influence. How many rely on the instructions they receive from ministers, or commentaries, or books, or their own powers of enquiry, not recognizing that all these things, without the Spirit of God, will only kill, but can never make alive: can only damn, but can never save.

REMARKS

They are blind leaders of the blind, who attempt to teach the things of religion to others, without being themselves taught of God.

This is applicable both to preachers and to teachers in Sabbath Schools and Bible classes. If any of them attempt to teach the Scriptures without being themselves taught of God, they are no more fit to teach than the most ignorant person in the streets is fit to teach astronomy.

I fear that both ministers and teachers generally, have understood very little of their NEED of this divine teaching, and have felt very little the necessity of praying over their sermons and Bible lessons, until they feel confident that the Spirit of God has possessed their minds with the true idea of the particular portion of the Word of God. If this were done as it ought to be, their instructions would be far

more effectual than we now see them.

Our Saviour prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth." John 17:17. This grand means of sanctification must be more richly enjoyed before the Church will know what entire sanctification means. They do not understand the Bible, and the reason is: THEY HAVE NOT GONE TO THE AUTHOR or His explanation of it. Although they may have this blessed privilege every day, of carrying the book to the Author for His explanation; yet how little do church members know of the Bible, which they are conscious they have been taught to know by the Holy Ghost!

Will you do this? Will you lay your hearts open to God, and not give Him rest, until He has filled you with divine knowledge? Will you search the Scriptures? I have often been asked by young converts, and young men preparing for the ministry, what they should read: READ THE BIBLE! I would give the same answer five hundred times. Over and above all other things, study the Bible.

HOW TO WIN SOULS
by Charles G. Finney
[Edited by William Allen]

Chapter 1

HOW TO TESTIFY FOR GOD

Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen. Isaiah 43:10

It is true, in general, that persons are affected by the subject of religion, in proportion to their conviction of its truth. Inattention to religion is the great reason why so little is felt concerning it. No person can look at the great truths of religion, as truths, and not feel deeply concerning them. The devil cannot: he feels and trembles. Angels in heaven feel in view of these things. God feels! An intellectual conviction of truth is always accompanied with feelings of some kind.

One grand design God has in leaving Christians in the world after their conversion is, that they may be witnesses for God. It is that they may call the attention of the thoughtless multitude to the subject

of religion, and make them see the difference in the character and destiny of those who believe and those who reject the Gospel.

Hence we see why God has scattered His children everywhere; in families, and among the nations. He never would suffer them to be all together in one place, however agreeable it might be to their feelings. He wishes them to be scattered. When the church at Jerusalem was herded together, neglecting to go forth as Christ had commanded, to preach the Gospel all over the world, God let loose a persecution upon them and scattered them abroad, and then "they went everywhere preaching the Gospel." Acts 8:4

In examining the text I propose to show:

I. TO WHAT POINTS THE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE REQUIRED TO TESTIFY.

In general, they are to testify to the truth of the Bible. They are competent witnesses to this, for they have experience of its truth. The experimental Christian has no more need of external evidence to prove the truth of the Bible to his mind, than he has to prove his own existence.

The Christian is conscious that the Bible is true. The

youngest convert knows by his experience the truth of the Bible. He may hear objections from infidels, which he never thought of, and which he cannot answer, and he may be confounded; but he cannot be driven from his ground. He will say, "I cannot answer you, but I know that the Bible is true." A Christian sees his experience drawn and pictured in the Bible and he sees the likeness to be so exact that he knows that it is true.

II. HOW THEY ARE TO TESTIFY.

By precept and example. On every proper occasion by their lips, but always by their lives. Christians have no right to be silent with their lips; they should rebuke, exhort, and entreat with all longsuffering and doctrine. But their main influence as witnesses is by their example.

They are required to be witnesses in this way, because example teaches with so much greater force than precept. This is universally known. Actions speak louder than words. But where both precept and example are brought to bear, it brings the greatest amount of influence to bear upon the minds of sinners. Christians should live in their daily walk and conversation, as if they believed the Bible.

1. They should live as if they believed the soul to be immortal and as if they believed that death will not be the termination of their existence, but only the entrance into an unchanging state. They ought to live so as to make this impression upon all around them. It is easy to see that precept without example on this point will do no good. All the arguments in the world will not convince mankind that you believe this, unless you live as if you believed it. Your reasoning may be unanswerable, but if you do not live accordingly, your practice will defeat your arguments.

2. The vanity and unsatisfying nature of the things of this world. You are to testify this by your life. The failure in this is the great stumbling-block in the way of the salvation of mankind. Here the testimony of God's children is needed more than anywhere else. Men are so struck with the objects of sense, and so constantly occupied with them, that they are very apt to shut out eternity from their minds. A small object that is held close to the eye, may shut out the distant ocean. So the things of the world, which are near, magnify so in men's minds, that they overlook everything else.

One important design God has in keeping Christians in the world is, to teach people on this point. But

suppose professors of religion teach the vanity of earthly things by precept, and contradict it in practice. Suppose the women are just as fond of dress, and just as particular in observing all the fashions, and the men as eager to have fineå houses and equipage, as the people of the world; who does not see that it would be quite ridiculous for them to testify with their lips, that this world is all vanity, and its joys unsatisfying and empty?

3. The satisfying nature of religion. Christians are bound to show by their conduct, that they are actually satisfied with the enjoyments of religion, without the pomp and vanities of the world; that the joys of religion and communion with God keep them living above the world. They are to manifest that this world is not their home. Their profession is that heaven is a reality, and that they expect to dwell there forever.

4. The guilt and danger of sinners. Christians are bound to warn sinners of their awful condition, and exhort them to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on eternal life. But who does not know that the manner of doing this is everything? Sinners are often struck under conviction by the very manner in which something is done. There was a man once very much opposed to a certain preacher. On being

asked to specify some reason for this, he replied, "I cannot bear to hear him, for he says the word 'hell' in such a way that it rings in my ears for a long time afterwards." He was displeased with the very thing that constituted the power of speaking that word.

5. The love of Christ. You are to bear witness to the reality of the love of Christ, by the regard you show for His precepts, His honour, and His kingdom. You should act as if you believed that He died for the sins of the whole world, and as if you blamed sinners for rejecting His great salvation. This is the only legitimate way in which you can impress sinners with the love of Christ. Professing Christians, instead of this, often live so as to make the impression on sinners that Christ is so compassionate that they have very little need to fear Him.

6. The necessity of holiness in order to enter heaven. It will not do to depend on talking about this. Christians must live holy lives, and thus testify that men need not expect to be saved, unless they are holy.

The idea has so long prevailed, that we cannot expect to be perfect here, that many professors of religion do not so much as seriously aim at a sinless life. They cannot honestly say that they ever really

meant to live without sin. They drift along before the tides in a loose, sinful, unhappy manner, at which, doubtless, the devil laughs, because it is, of all others, the surest way to hell.

7. The necessity of self-denial, humility, and heavenly-mindedness. Christians ought to show by their own example, what the religion is, which is expected of men. That is the most powerful preaching, after all, and the most likely to have influence over the impenitent, by showing the great difference between them and Christians by a different course, by copying as near as possible their present manner of life, and conforming to them as much as they possibly can. They seem to think that they can make men fall in with religion best, by bringing religion down to their standard; as if the nearer you bring religion to the world, the more likely the world will be to embrace it.

No, the true way is to exhibit religion and the world in strong contrast, or you can never make sinners feel the necessity of a change. Until the necessity of this fundamental change is embodied and held forth in a strong light by example, how can you make men believe that they are going to be sent to hell if they are not wholly transformed in heart and life?

8. Meekness and patience. The people of God

should always show a temper like the Son of God, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again. If a professor of religion is irritable, and ready to resent an injury, and fly into a passion, and take the same measures as the people of the world to get redress, by going to the law and the like; how is he to make people to believe that there is any reality in a change of heart? They cannot recommend religion while they have such a spirit. If you are in the habit of resenting injurious treatment; if you do not bear it meekly, and put the best construction that can be on it, you contradict the Gospel.

9. The necessity of entire honesty in a Christian. Oh what a field opens here for remark! But I cannot go over it fully now; it extends to all the departments of life. Christians need to show the strictest regard to integrity in every department of business, and in all their intercourse with their fellow men. If every Christian would pay a scrupulous regard to honesty, and always be conscientious to do exactly right, it would make a powerful impression on the minds of the people, of the reality of religious principle.

I am happy to say that there are some men who deal on this principle of integrity. And the wicked hate them for it; they rail against them, and vociferate in bar-rooms, that they will never buy

goods from such and such individuals; and that such a hypocrite shall never touch a dollar of their money, and all that; and then they will go right away and buy from them, because they know that they will be honestly dealt with. This is a testimony to the truth of religion that is heard from Georgia to Maine.

And if Christians will do the same in politics, they will sway the destinies of nations, without involving themselves at all in the base and corrupting strife of parties. Only let Christians generally determine to vote for no man for any office, who is not an honest man, and a man of pure morals, and let it be known that Christians are united in this, whatever may be their difference in political sentiments; and no man would be put up who is not such a character.

The dishonesty of the churches is cursing the world. I am not going to preach a political sermon I assure you; but I want to show you, that if you mean to impress men favourably to your religion by your lives, you must be honest, strictly honest, in business, politics, and everything you do. What do you suppose these ungodly politicians who know themselves to be playing a dishonest game, in carrying an election, think of your religion, when they see you uniting with them? They know that you are a hypocrite.

REMARKS.

It is unreasonable for professors of religion to wonder at the thoughtlessness of sinners. Everything considered, the carelessness of sinners is not wonderful. We are affected by testimony, and only by that testimony which is received to our minds. Sinners are so taken up with business, pleasure, and the things of the world, that they will not examine the Bible to find what religion is. Their feelings are excited only on worldly subjects, because these only are brought into warm contact with their minds. Therefore, the things of the world make a strong impression on them. But there is so little to make an impression on their minds in respect to eternity, and to bring the things of religion home to them, that they do not feel on the subject.

If they examined the subject, they would feel. But they do not examine it, nor think upon it, nor care for it. And they never will, unless God's witnesses rise up and testify. But inasmuch as the great body of Christians, in fact, live so as to testify on the other side by their conduct, how can we expect that sinners will feel correctly on the subject? Nearly all the testimony and all the influence that comes to

their minds tends to make them feel the other way. God has left His cause here before the human race, and left His witnesses to testify on His behalf, and behold they all turn round and testify the other way! Is it any wonder that sinners are careless?

We see why it is that preaching does so little good, and how it is that so many sinners get hardened. Sinners who live under the preaching of the Gospel are often supposed to be hardened; but only let the churches wake up and act consistently, and they will begin to feel. If the churches were to live one week as if they believed the Bible, sinners would melt down before them.

They will never have a revival in any place, while the whole church in effect, testify against the minister. Often it is the case that where there is the most preaching, there is the least religion, because the church contradicts the preaching. I never knew means fail of a revival, where Christians lived consistently. One of the first things is to raise the standard of religion, so as to embody and hang out in the sight of all men, the truth of the Gospel. Unless ministers can get the churches to wake up, and act as if religion were true, and back their testimony by their lives, in vain will they attempt to promote a revival.

Every Christian makes an impression by his conduct, and witnesses either for the one or the other. His looks, dress, and whole demeanour, make a constant impression on the one side or the other. He cannot help testifying for or against religion. He is either gathering with Christ, or scattering abroad. At every step you tread on chords which will vibrate to all eternity. Every time you move, you touch keys whose sounds will re-echo over all the hills and dales of heaven, and through all the dark caverns of hell.

Are you going to walk in the street? Take care how you dress. What is that on your head? What does that gaudy ribbon, and those ornaments upon your dress, say, to everyone who meets you? They make the impression that you wish to be thought pretty. Take care! You might as well write on your clothes, "There is no truth in religion. Give me dress; give me fashion, and I am happy."

What is the testimony on the leaf of the record which is now sealed for the judgment concerning this day? Have you manifested a sympathy with the Son of God, when His heart is bleeding in view of the desolations of Zion? Have your children, clerks, and servants seen it be so? Have they seen a solemnity in your countenance, and tears in your

eyes, in view of perishing souls?

Perhaps hundreds of souls will meet you in the judgment, and curse you for leading them to hell, by practically denying the truth of the Gospel. What will become of this city, and of the world, when the churches are united in practically testifying that God is a liar? They testify by their lives, that if they make a profession of religion and live a moral life, that is religion enough. Oh what a doctrine of devils is that! It is enough to ruin the whole human race.

Chapter II
HOW TO APPROACH THE UNSAVED

The object of this chapter is to direct Christians in the use of means for accomplishing their infinitely desirable end, the salvation of souls.

I. DEALING WITH CARELESS SINNERS.

1. In regard to time. It is important that you should select a proper time to try to make a serious impression on the mind of a careless sinner.

2. It is desirable, if possible, to address a person who is careless, when he is disengaged from other

employments. In proportion as his attention is taken up with something else, it will be difficult to awaken him to religion.

3. It is important to take a person, if possible, at a time when he is not strongly excited with any other subject.

4. If possible, where you wish to converse with a man on the subject of salvation, take him when he is in a good temper.

5. If possible, always take an opportunity to converse with careless sinners when they are alone. Most men are too proud to be conversed with freely respecting themselves in the presence of others, even their own family.

6. Try to seize an opportunity to converse with a careless sinner, when the events of Providence seem to favour your design.

7. Seize the earliest opportunity to converse with those around you who are careless. You must seek an opportunity, and if none offers, make one. Make it look like a matter of business.

8. If you have any feeling for a particular individual, take an opportunity to converse with him while this feeling continues. If it is a truly benevolent feeling,

you have reason to believe that the Spirit of God is ready to bless your efforts for his conversion. Make it the subject of special and importunate prayer.

9. In regard to the manner of doing this: When you approach a careless individual, be sure to treat him kindly. Let him see that you address him, not because you seek a quarrel, but because you love his soul, and desire his best good in time and eternity.

10. Be solemn. Avoid all lightness of manner or language.

11. Be respectful. A rude or coarse style of address is only calculated to create an unfavourable opinion both of yourself and of your religion.

12. Be sure to be very plain. Do not cover up any circumstance of the person's character, and his relations to God. Lay it all open. Before you can cure a wound, you must probe it to the bottom.

13. Be sure to address his conscience. Unless you address the conscience pointedly, you get no hold of the mind at all.

14. Bring the great and fundamental truths of the Gospel to bear upon his mind.

15. Be very patient. If he has a real difficulty in his

mind, be very patient until you find out what it is, and then clear it up.

16. Be careful to guard your own spirit. There are many people who have not good temper enough to converse with those who are much opposed to religion.

17. If the sinner is inclined to entrench himself against God, be careful not to take his part in anything. Bring up his particular sins, if you know his history; kindly but plainly; not to give offence, but to awaken conscience, and give full force to the truth. It is generally best to be short, and not spin out what you have to say.

II. HOW TO DEAL WITH AWAKENED SINNERS

Be careful to distinguish between an awakened sinner, and one who is under conviction. When you find a person who feels a little on the subject of religion, do not take it for granted that he is convicted of sin. Persons are often awakened by some Providential circumstance, and they are ready to hear on the subject of religion with attention and seriousness, and some feeling.

If you find a person awakened, lose no time to pour in light upon his mind. Show him the exceeding

strictness of the Divine law. Make him see how it condemns his thoughts and life. Search out his heart. If possible melt him down on the spot. When once you have got a sinner's attention, very often his conviction and conversion are the work of a few moments.

III. THE MANNER OF DEALING WITH CONVICTED SINNERS

By convicted sinner, I mean one who feels himself condemned by the law of God. He sees and feels his guilty state, and knows what his remedy is. When a person is convicted, but not converted, and remains in an anxious state, there is generally some specific reason for it.

1. Sometimes the individual has some idol, something which he loves more than God, which prevents him from giving himself up.

2. Perhaps he has done an injury to some person which calls for redress, and he is unwilling to confess it, or to make a just recompense.

3. Sometimes there is some particular sin which he will not forsake. He pretends it is only a small one, or that it is no sin at all.

4. Perhaps he has a prejudice against someone, or

is unwilling to forgive someone.

5. Perhaps he entertains some errors respecting the thing to be done, which may be keeping him out of the Kingdom. He may be waiting for more conviction, or he may be waiting for certain feelings.

Be careful in conversing with convicted sinners, not to make any compromise with them on any point where they have a difficulty. If you do, they will be sure to take advantage of it, and thus get a false hope.

Be sure to deal thoroughly. The Church is now filled up with hypocrites, because people were never made to see that unless they made an entire consecration of all to Christ--all their time, all their talents, all their influence--they would never get to heaven. Many think they can be Christians, and yet dream along through life. It is a sad mistake, and they will find it so.

Be careful not to mislead sinners so as to leave the impression that a selfish submission to God will answer, or a selfish acceptance of the Atonement, or a selfish giving up to Christ and receiving Him, as if a man were make a good bargain, giving up his sins, and receiving salvation in exchange. Man's selfish heart will eagerly seize such a view of

religion, and thus get a false hope.

REMARKS

Make it an object of constant study, and of daily reflection and prayer, to learn how to deal with sinners so as to promote their conversion. It is the great business on earth of every Christian, to save souls.

Chapter III
HOW TO INSTRUCT ANXIOUS SINNERS

What must I do to be saved? Acts 16:30

These were the words of the jailer at Philippi: the question which he put to Paul and Silas, who were then under his care as prisoners.

It is my design to show what are the instructions that should be given to anxious sinners when they ask this question, in order to promote their speedy and effectual conversion. In doing this, I will show:

I. WHAT ARE NOT PROPER DIRECTIONS TO BE GIVEN TO ANXIOUS SINNERS.

No more important inquiry was ever made than this, "What must I do to be saved?" Mankind are apt enough to enquire, "What shall I eat, and what shall I drink?" And the question may be answered in various ways with little danger. But when a sinner asks in earnest, "What must I do to be saved?" it is of infinite importance that he should receive the right answer.

1. No direction should be given to a sinner that will leave him still in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. No answer is proper to be given, with which, if he comply, he would not go to heaven, if he should die the next moment.

2. No direction should be given that does not include a change of heart, or a right heart, or a hearty obedience to Christ. In other words, nothing is proper which does not imply actually becoming a Christian. Any other direction which falls short of this is of no value. It will not bring him any nearer the kingdom, it will do no good, but will lead him to defer the very thing which he must do in order to be saved. The sinner should be told plainly at once, what he must do or die; and he should be told nothing that does not include a right state of heart.

Whatever you may do, sinner, that does not include a right heart, is sin. Whether you read the Bible or not, it is sin, so long as you remain in rebellion against God. Whether you go to meetings, or stay away; whether you pray or not; it is nothing but rebellion every moment.

I might almost say that there is almost an endless variety of ways in which false comfort is given to anxious sinners. The more experience I have, and the more I observe the ways in which even good people deal with anxious sinners, the more I feel grieved at the endless fooleries and falsehoods with which they attempt to comfort their anxious friends, and thus, in fact, deceive them and beguile them out of their salvation.

Now God desires that they should be comforted. He is benevolent and has kind feelings, and His heart yearns over them when he sees them so distressed. But he sees that there is only one way to give a sinner real comfort. He has more benevolence and compassion than all men, and wishes to comfort them; but He has fixed the terms, as unyielding as His throne, on which He will give a sinner relief, and He will not altar. He knows that nothing else will do the sinner effectual good, for nothing can make him happy until he repents of his sins and forsakes

them, and turns to God; therefore God will not yield.

Our object, in dealing with sinners, should be the same as that of God. We should feel compassion and benevolence just as He does, and be as ready to give comfort, but be sure that it is of the right kind. The fact is, our prime object should be to induce the sinner to obey God. His comfort ought to be with us, and with him, but a secondary object; and while we are more anxious to relieve his distress than to have him cease to abuse and dishonour God, we are not likely, by our instructions to do him any real good.

Overlooking this principle has often misled professors of religion, and when they have heard others dealing faithfully with anxious sinners, they have accused them of cruelty. I have often had professors of religion bring anxious sinners to me, and beg me to comfort them, and when I have probed the sinner's conscience to the quick, they have shuddered and sometimes taken the sinner's part. It is sometimes impossible to deal effectually with young people who are anxious, in the presence of their parents, because they have so much more compassion for their children than regard to the honour of God. This is all wrong; and with such views and feelings you had better hold your tongue than say anything to the anxious.

One of the ways in which people give false comfort to distressed sinners, is by asking them, "What have you done? You are not so bad." As if they had never done anything wicked, and had in reality no occasion to feel distressed at all.

No sinner ever had an idea of his sins greater than they were. No sinner ever had an adequate idea of how great a sinner he is. It is not probable that any man could live under a full sight of his sins. God has, in mercy, spared all His creatures on earth that worst of sights: a naked human heart. The sinner's guilt is much more deep and damning than he thinks, and his danger is much greater than he thinks it is; and if he should see them as they are, probably he could not live one moment.

Others tell an awakened sinner that "conversion is a progressive work," and in this way ease his anxiety. When a man is distressed because he sees himself to be such a sinner that unless he turns to God he will be damned, it is a great relief to have some friend hold out to him the idea that he can become better by degrees, and that he is now coming on little by little. They tell him, "Why, you cannot expect to get along all at once; I do not believe in these SUDDEN conversions, you must wait and let it work; you have begun well, and by and by you will

get comfort."

All this is from the bottomless pit. The truth is, regeneration or conversion, is not a progressive work. What is regeneration but the beginning of obedience to God? Is that beginning of a thing progressive? It is the first act of genuine obedience to God; the first voluntary action of the mind that is what God approves, or that can be regarded as obedience to God. This is conversion.

Another way in which anxious sinners are deceived with false comfort, is by being advised to dismiss the subject for the present. Men who are supposed to be wise and good, have assumed to be so much wiser than God; and when God is dealing with a sinner by His Spirit, and is endeavouring to bring him to an immediate decision, they think that God is crowding too hard, and that it is necessary for them to interfere; and they will advise the person to take a ride, or to go into company, or to engage in business, or do something that will relieve his mind a little, at least for the present.

Such advice, if it is true conviction of sin that distresses the sinner, is, in no case, either safe or lawful. The strivings of the Holy Spirit to bring a sinner to himself, will never hurt him, nor drive him crazy. He may make himself deranged by resisting

the strivings of the Spirit; but it is blasphemous to think that the blessed, wise, benevolent Spirit of God, would ever have so little care as to derange and destroy the soul He came to sanctify and save.

The proper course to take with a sinner, when the striving of the Spirit throws him into distress, is, to instruct him: clear up his views, correct his mistakes, and make the way of salvation so plain that he may see it right before him; not to dismiss the subject, but to co-operate with the Holy Spirit, and thus hush all those dreadful agonies which are produced by resisting the Holy Ghost. REMEMBER, if an awakened sinner voluntarily dismisses the subject once, probably he will never take it up again.

II. WHAT IS A PROPER ANSWER TO THE ENQUIRY, "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

Generally, you may give the sinner any direction, or tell him to do anything, that includes a right heart; and if you make him understand it, and do it, he will be saved. The Spirit of God, in striving with sinners, suits His strivings to the state of mind in which He finds them. His great object in striving with them is to dislodge them from their hiding places, and bring them to submit to God at once.

1. It is generally in point, and a safe and suitable direction, to tell a sinner to repent. I say generally, for sometimes the Spirit of God seems not so much to direct the sinner's attention to his own sins as to some other thing.

In the days of the apostles, the minds of the people seem to have agitated mainly on the question whether Jesus was the Messiah. And so the apostles directed much of their attention to this point, to prove that He was the Messiah; and whenever anxious sinners asked what they must do in order to be saved, they exhorted them to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

They bore down on this point because this was where the Spirit of God was striving with them; and this was the subject which especially agitated the minds of the people, and consequently this would probably be the first thing a person would do on submitting to God. It was the grand point at issue between God and the Jew and Gentile of those days--whether Jesus Christ was the Son of God. It was the point in dispute; to bring the sinner to yield this controverted question was the most effectual way to humble them.

At other times it will be found that the Spirit of God is dealing with sinners chiefly in reference to their own

sins. Sometimes He deals with them in regard to a particular duty, such as prayer, perhaps family prayer. The sinner will be found to be contesting that point with God, whether it be right for him to pray, or whether he ought to pray in his family. I have known striking cases of this kind, where the individual was struggling on this point, and as soon as he fell on his knees to pray, he yielded his heart, showing that this was the very point which the Spirit of God was contesting; the hinge on which his controversy with God all turned. That was his conversion.

Repentance is a change of mind, as regards sin itself. It is not only a change of views concerning sin, but a change of feeling towards sin. It is what is naturally understood by a change of mind on any subject of interest and importance. We hear that such a man has changed his mind on the subject of abolition, for instance, or that he has changed his views on politics; everybody understands that he has undergone a change in his views, his feelings, and his conduct. This is repentance on that subject: it is a change of mind.

Repentance always implies abhorrence of sin. It is feeling towards sin just as God feels. It always implies forsaking sin. Sinners should be made to understand this. The sinner that repents does not

feel as penitent sinners think they would feel at giving up their sins, if they should become religious. Impenitent sinners look upon religion like this: that if they become Christians, they should be obliged to stay away from balls and parties, and obliged to give up theatres, or gambling, or other things they now take delight in. And they see not how ever they could enjoy themselves, if they should break off from all those things.

I know there are some professors of religion who would be very glad to betake themselves to their former practices, were it not that they feel constrained, by fear of losing their character, or the like. Now, mark me; if they feel so, it is because they do not hate sin. If they desire their former ways, they have no religion, they have never repented; for repentance always consists in a change of views and feeling. If they were really converted, instead of desiring such things, they would turn away from them with loathing; instead of lusting after the flesh pots of Egypt, and desiring to go into their former circles, parties, and balls, and the like, they would find their highest pleasure in obeying God.

2. Sinners should be told to believe the Gospel. Here, also, they need to have explained to them, what is not faith, and what is. Nothing is more

common than for a sinner, when told to believe the Gospel, to say, "I do believe it." The fact is, he has been brought up to admit the fact, that the Gospel is true, but he does not believe it; he knows nothing about the evidence of it, and all his faith is a mere admission without evidence.

The fact is that the careless sinner does not believe the Gospel at all. The idea that the careless sinner is an intellectual believer is absurd. The devil is an intellectual believer, and that is what makes him tremble. What makes a sinner anxious is that he begins to be an intellectual believer, and that makes him feel. No being in heaven, or earth, or hell, can intellectually believe the truths of the Gospel, and not feel on the subject.

Faith does not consist in an intellectual conviction that Christ died for you in particular, nor in a belief that you are a Christian, or that you ever shall be, or that your sins are forgiven. But faith is that trust or confidence in the Scriptures, that leads the individual to act as if they were true.

The sinner should have it explained to him, and be made to see that the faith which the Gospel requires, is just that confidence in Christ, which leads him to act on what He says as a certain fact. This is believing in Christ.

3. Another direction, proper to be given to the sinner is, that he should give his heart to God. God says, "My son, give Me thine heart." But here also there needs to be explanation, to make him understand what it is. It is amazing that there should be any darkness here. It is the language of common life, in everybody's mouth, and everybody understands just what it means, when we use it in regard to anything else. But when it comes to religion, they seem to be all in the dark.

Now to give your heart to God is the same thing as to give your heart to anyone else; the same as for a woman to give her heart to her husband. Ask that woman if she understands this, and she replies, "Oh yes, that is plain enough; it is to place my affections on him, and try to please him in everything." Very well, place your affections on God, and try to please Him in everything. Sinner, what God asks of you, is, that you should love Him supremely.

4. Submit to God, is also a proper direction to anxious sinners. And oh how dark sinners are here too! Scarcely a sinner can be found who will not tell you that he is willing to submit to God. But they do not understand it. They need to be told what true submission is. Sometimes they think that it means that they should be willing to be damned.

Sometimes they place themselves in this attitude, and call it submission; they say, if they are elected they shall be saved and if not they shall be damned. This is not submission. True submission is yielding obedience to God.

5. Another proper direction to be given to a sinner is, confess and forsake your sins. This means that they should both confess and forsake them. They must confess to God their sins against God, and confess to men their sins against men, and confess them all. A man does not forsake his sins until he has made all the reparation in his power. If he has stolen money, or defrauded his neighbour out of property, he does not forsake his sins by merely resolving not to steal any more, or not to cheat again; he must make reparation to that extent of his power. So, if he has slandered anyone, he does not forsake his sin by merely saying he will not do so again, he must make reparation. So, in like manner, if he has robbed God, as all sinners have, the must make reparation as far as he has power.

What would a merchant think if his hired clerk should take all the capital and set up a store of his own, and die with it in his hands? Will such a man go to heaven? "No," you say, "if such a man does not go to hell, there might as well be no hell." God

would prove Himself infinitely unjust, to let such a character go unpunished.

What then, shall we say of the man who has robbed God all his life? Here God set him to be His clerk, to manage some of His affairs, and he has gone and stolen all the money, and says it is his and he keeps it, and dies, and gives it to his children, as if it were his own lawful property. Is that man going to heaven? Has that man forsaken sin? I tell you no. If he has not surrendered himself and all to God, he has not taken the first step in the way to heaven.

6. Another proper direction to be given to sinners is, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Joshua 24:15. Under the Old Testament dispensation, this, or something equivalent to it, was the most common direction given. It was not common to call on men to believe in Christ until the days of John the Baptist. Under Joshua, this was something which the people all understood more easily than they would a call to believe on the distant Messiah.

Sinners are called upon to choose--what? Whether they will serve God or the world; whether they will follow holiness or sin. Let them be made to understand what is meant by choosing, and what is to be chosen, and then if the thing be done from the heart, they will be saved.

Any of these directions, if complied with, will constitute true conversion. The particular exercises will vary in different cases. Sometimes the first exercise in conversion, is submission to God, sometimes repentance, sometimes faith, sometimes the choice of God and His service; in short, whatever their thoughts are taken up with at the time.

If their thoughts are directed to Christ at the moment, the first exercise will be faith. If to sin, the first exercise will be repentance. If to their future course of life, it is choosing the service of God. If to the divine government, it is submission. It is important to find out just where the Holy Spirit is pressing the sinner at the time, and then care to push that point; push him right up to an immediate choice of obedience to God.

III. SEVERAL ERRORS WHICH ANXIOUS SINNERS ARE APT TO FALL INTO RESPECTING THIS GREAT INQUIRY.

1. The first error is in supposing that they must make themselves better, or prepare themselves, so as in some way to recommend themselves to the mercy of God. It is marvelous that sinners will not understand that all they have to do is, to accept

salvation from God, all prepared to their hands. But they all, learned or unlearned, at first betake themselves to a legal course to get relief.

This is one principal reason why they do not become Christians at once, just as soon as they begin to attend to the subject. They should be shown at once that it is impossible they should be any better until they do what God requires. During every pulse that beats, and every breath they draw, they are growing worse, because they are standing out in rebellion against God, so long as they will not do the very thing which God requires of them as the first thing to be done.

2. Another error is in supposing that they must suffer a considerable time under conviction, as a kind of punishment, before they are ready to come to Christ. And so they will pray for conviction; and they think that if they be ground down to the earth for a sufficient time, then God will pity them, and be more ready to help them when He sees them so very miserable.

They should be made to understand clearly, that they are thus unhappy and miserable, merely because they refuse to accept the relief which God offers. Take the case of the stubborn child, when his parent stands over him with the rod, and the child

shudders and screams. Should that child imagine that he is gaining anything by his agony? Does his father pity him any more because he stands out? Who does not see that he is all the while growing worse?

3. Sometimes sinners imagine that they must wait for different feelings, before they submit to God. They say, "I do not think I feel right yet to accept Christ; I do not think I am prepared to be converted yet." They ought to be made to see that what God requires of them is to feel differently; and to say they must feel differently before they obey God, is to say, "I do not feel right, because I do not feel right."

God tells the sinner to love Him, and the sinner replies, "Lord, I must wait until I feel differently." Why, sinner, you are not to wait for these feelings, as if they were to come into your mind from some other quarter. What God requires of you is, the present act of your mind, in turning from sin to holiness, and from the service of Satan to the service of the living God. They very thing required of you is to feel right; and do you wait for these feelings, as if they were not to be exercises of your own?

4. Another error of sinners is to suppose that they must wait until their hearts are changed. "What,"

they say, "am I to believe in Christ before my heart is changed? Do you mean that I am to repent before my heart is changed?"

Now the simple answer to all this is, that the change of heart is the very thing in question. God requires the sinner to love Him, that is, to change his heart. God requires him to repent, that is to change his heart. God requires him to believe the Gospel, that is, to change his heart. Goes does not tell him to wait until his heart is changed, and then repent and believe, and love God. To do any of these things is to change your heart, and to make you a new heart, just as God requires.

5. Sinners often get the idea that they are perfectly willing to do what God requires. Tell them to do this thing, or that, to repent or believe, to give God their hearts, and they say, "Oh yes, I am perfectly willing to do that. I wish I could do it. I would give anything if I could do it." They ought to understand that being truly willing, is doing it; but that there is a difference between willing and desiring. People often desire to be Christians, when they are wholly unwilling to be so. A man may desire to go to Philadelphia on many accounts, while, for still more weighty reasons, he chooses not to go there.

So the sinner may desire to be a Christian. He may

see many good things in being a Christian. He may see that if her were a Christian he would be a good deal more happy, and that he should go to heaven when he dies, and yet he is not willing to be a Christian. WILLING TO OBEY CHRIST is to be a Christian. When an individual actually chooses to obey God, he is a Christian, but all such desires as do not terminate in actual choices, are nothing.

6. The sinner will sometimes say that he offers to give God his heart, but he intimates that God is unwilling to accept it. But this is absurd. What does God ask? Why, that you should love Him. Now, for you to say that you are willing to give God your heart, but that God is unwilling to accept it, is the same as saying, that you are willing to love God, but that God is not willing to be loved by you, and will not suffer you to love Him. It is important to clear up all these points in the sinner's mind, that he may have no dark and mysterious corner to rest in, where the truth will not reach him.

7. Sinners sometimes get the idea that they repent, when they are only convicted. Whenever the sinner is found resting in any LIE, let the truth sweep it away, however much it may pain and distress him. If he has an error of this kind, you must tear it away from him, if you do not mean that he shall stumble

into the depths of hell.

8. Sinners are often wholly taken up with looking at themselves, to see if they can find something, some kind of feeling or other, that will recommend them to God. David Brainerd was for a long time taken up with his state of mind, looking for some feelings which would recommend him to God. Thus, the poor man, for want of correct instruction, was driven almost to despair, and it is easy to see that this Christian exercises through life were greatly modified, and his comfort and usefulness much impaired by the false theory he had adopted on this point.

You must turn the sinner away from himself to something else. Suppose he keeps poring over himself, until he is going into a state of despair; the proper course then is, to turn off his attention from looking at himself, and make him look at some duty to be performed, or make him look at Christ, and perhaps before he is away, he will find that he has submitted to God.

REMARKS

You should be careful to distinguish between an awakened sinner, and one who is under conviction.

When you find a person who feels a little on the subject of religion, do not take it for granted that he is convicted of sin, and thus omit to use means to show him his sin. Persons are sometimes awakened by some providential circumstance; such as sickness, thunderstorm, pestilence, death in the family, disappointment, or the like; or by the Spirit of God, so that their ears are open, and they are ready to listen on the subject of religion with attention and seriousness, and some feeling.

If you find a person awakened, no matter by what means, lose no time to pour in light upon his mind. Do not be afraid, but show him the breadth of the divine law, and the exceeding strictness of its precepts. Make him see how it condemns his thoughts and life. Search out his heart and find what is there, and bring it up before his mind, as far as you can. If possible, melt him down on the spot. When once you have got a sinner's attention, very often his conviction and conversion are the work of a few moments. You can sometimes do more in five minutes than in years, or a whole life, while he is careless or indifferent.

Be careful to find the point where the Spirit of God is pressing a sinner, and press the same point in all your remarks. If you divert his attention from that

point, you will be in great danger of destroying his convictions. Take pains to learn the state of his mind, what he is thinking of, how he feels, and what he feels most deeply upon, and then press that thoroughly; and do not divert his mind by talking about anything else.

Great evils have arisen, and many false hopes have been created, by not discriminating between an awakened and a convicted sinner. For want of this, persons who are only awakened are immediately told, "You must repent," Submit to God," when they are not in fact convinced of their guilt, nor instructed so far as even to know what submission means. This is one way in which revivals have been greatly injured.

If you are going to deal with sinners, remember that you are soon to meet them in the judgment, and be sure to treat them in such a way that if they be lost, it will be their own fault. Do not try to comfort them with false notions now, and have them reproach you with it then. Better suppress your false sympathy, and let the naked truth cleave them asunder, joints and marrow, than to smooth them with false comforts, and beguile them away from God.

Much depends on the manner in which a person is dealt with, when under conviction. Much of his

future comfort and usefulness depends on the clearness, strength, and firmness, with which the directions of the Gospel are given, when he is under conviction. If those who deal with him are afraid to use the probe thoroughly, he will always be a poor, sickly, doubting Christian. If converted at all, he will never do much good.

But if, when a sinner is under conviction, you pour the truth into his mind, put in the probe, break up the old foundations, sweep away his refuges of lies, and use the Word of God like fire and like a hammer, you will find that the will come out with clear views, and strong faith, and firm principles, not a doubting, halting, irresolute Christian, but one who will follow the Lord wholly. This is the way to make strong Christians.

This has been imminently the case in many revivals in recent days. I have heard old Christians say of the converts, "These converts were born men and women, fully grown; they never were children, but have, at the very outset, all the clearness of view, and strength of faith, of old Christians. They seem to understand the doctrines of religion, and to know what to do, and how to take hold to promote revivals, better than one in a hundred of the old members in the churches."

Where instructions are not clear, and are missed up with errors, the Spirit may strive, even for years, in great mercy, to get sinners through the fog of false instruction; but not so where their duty is clearly explained to them, and they are brought right up to the single point of immediate submission, and have all their false pretences exposed, and the path of duty made perfectly plain. Then, if they do not submit, the Spirit of God forsakes them, and their state is well nigh hopeless.

There is not a case of protracted conviction recorded in the whole Bible. All the conversions recorded there, are sudden conversions. And I am persuaded there never would have been such multitudes of tedious convictions, often ending in nothing after all, if it had not been for those theological perversions which have filled the world with "cannot-ism." In Bible days they told sinners to repent, and they did it.

Afraid of sudden conversions! Some of the best Christians of my acquaintance were convicted and converted in less than an hour, and came right out to the Lord's side, and have been shining lights in the churches ever since.

Finally, never tell a sinner anything, nor give him any direction, that will lead him to stop short, or that

does not include submission to God. A young in New England once met a minister in the street, and asked him what he should do to be saved. The minister told him to go home, and go into his chamber, and kneel down and give his heart to God. "Oh, sir," said the boy, "I feel so bad, I am afraid I shall not live to get home." The minister saw his error, and felt the rebuke thus unconsciously given by a child, and told him, "Well, then, give your heart to God here, and go home to your chamber and tell Him of it."

INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUNG CONVERTS
by Charles G. Finney
[edited by William Allen]

Chapter I
GROWTH IN GRACE

Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. II Peter 3:18

The term "grace" is used in the Bible in several different senses. Grace, in God, is synonymous with beneficence. It is underserved favour. In men, grace

means holiness; that is the sense in which it is used in the text; and to grow in grace is the same as to grow in holiness, or to increase in conformity to God.

I. WHAT IS MEANT BY GROWING IN GRACE.

To grow in grace is to increase in a spirit of conformity to the will of God, and to govern our conduct more and more by the same principles that God does. God has one great absorbing object which controls everything He does. It is the promotion of His own glory by seeking to fill the universe with holiness and happiness. He does this by exhibiting His own character. And our object should be the same: to exhibit the character of God more and more, to reflect as many of the rays of the image of God as possible. That is, we must aim constantly to be more and more like God. In other words, it is to obey more and more perfectly and constantly the law of God.

II. WHAT GROWTH IN GRACE DOES NOT MEAN.

It does not mean that gradual giving up of sin. Strange to tell, it would seem that some have so understood it; but we are nowhere in the Bible commanded to give up sin gradually, we are

everywhere commanded to give it up instantly and wholly.

III. CONDITIONS OF GROWTH IN GRACE.

1. Growth or increase in anything implies a beginning. Growth in the favour of God implies that we have already found favour in His sight, that we are already indebted for grace received, and that we are already in grace, in the sense of having a place among His favoured ones.

2. Consequently, growth in grace implies that we have already repented of our sin, have actually and practically abandoned all known sin. It cannot be that we are in favour with God if we are still indulging in known sin against Him. Being in favour with God implies that we are pardoned and favoured by Him, for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Pardon is favour, and implies the renunciation of rebellion against God.

3. Growth in the knowledge of God is a condition of growth in His favour. We might grow in knowledge, without growing in His favour, because we might not love and trust Him in accordance with this increased knowledge. But we cannot love and trust Him more perfectly, unless we become more perfectly

acquainted with Him. If our love and faith keep pace with our growing knowledge, we must grow in His favour.

4. Growth in the knowledge of God, as revealed in Jesus Christ, must be a condition of growth in His favour. It is in and through Jesus Christ that we get the true idea of the personality of the infinite God.

5. Growth in grace is conditioned on increasing knowledge of what is involved in entire consecration to God. True conversion to God involves the consecration of ourselves and of all that we have to Him, so far as we understand what is implied in this. But, at first, converts are by no means aware of all that is involved in the highest forms of consecration. They will soon learn that there are certain things that they did not think of, and that they did not give up to God. At first, perhaps, all that was in their thought was to lay their naked soul upon the altar, and give up their whole heart to God. But soon they may learn that they did not think of all their possessions, of everything that was dear to them.

To gain such a knowledge is a work of time; and growth in the favour of God is conditioned on making a full surrender and consecration to God of everything we are, and have, and desire, and love, as fast as these objects are presented to thought.

6. Another condition of growth in grace is intense earnestness and constancy in seeking increased religious light by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. You will gain no effectual religious light except by the inward showing and teaching of the Holy Spirit. This you will not obtain unless you continue in the true attitude of a disciple of Christ. Remember, He says, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:13. He will not, by His Holy Spirit, be your Divine Teacher unless you renounce self, and live in a state of continual consecration to Him.

7. Another condition of growth in grace is a constant conformity to all the teachings of the Holy Spirit, keeping up with our convictions of duty and with our growing knowledge of the will of God.

8. A more and more implicit faith in God is a condition of growth in grace. By implicit, I mean an unreasoning faith, a confidence in God's character so profound that we trust Him in the dark as well as in the light, as well when we do not understand the reasons of His dealings with us, or of His requirements, as when we do; a faith like that of Abraham, who "staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief" Romans 4:20; though the thing promised seemed irrational and impossible.

9. A more thoroughly sanctified sensibility is a condition of growth in the favour of God. By the sensibility, I mean that department of our nature that feels and desires, to which belongs all that we call desire, affection, emotion, feeling, appetite, passion, propensity, lust. The sensibility is an involuntary power, and moral actions and qualities cannot, with strict propriety, be predicted of it. The states of the sensibility have moral character only as they derive it, directly or indirectly, from the action of the will.

The nature of man, as a whole, in his depraved condition, is in a very unlovely state, and although the will may be given up to God, the sensibility may be in such a state as to be very unlovely in the sight of One that looks directly upon it, and knows perfectly every excited desire, passion, propensity, lust. It is through the sensibility, mainly, that we are assailed with temptations. It is through this that the Christian warfare is kept up.

The Christian warfare consists in the battle of the will with these various appetites, passions, propensities, and lusts, to keep them in subjection to the will of God. If the will maintains its integrity, and cleaves to the will of God, the soul does not sin in its battle with the excited states of the sensibility. But these rebellious propensities embarrass the will

in the service it renders to God. To keep them under, occupies much time, and thought, and strength. Hence the soul cannot render to God so complete a service, while exerting the full strength of the will to subjugate these propensities, as it otherwise might and would render.

These appetites, passions, and propensities, although not sinful in themselves, have been regarded and spoken of as indwelling sin. Strictly they cannot be sin, because they are involuntary. But they are often a great hindrance to our growth in the favour of God. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5:17. This means that we cannot do for God what we otherwise would, because we have to battle so much with the states of the sensibility, to keep them under. As the sensibility becomes more and more subdued and in harmony with the will's devotion to God, we are left free to render to God a more unembarrassed service. Therefore, the more thorough the sanctification of the sensibility, the more thoroughly we are in favour with God.

10. A growing thoroughness and universality of consecration, of spirit, and body, is the condition of

more and more growth in the favour of God. It is common, at first, for the steadfastness of the will's devotion to God to be overcome by the clamour of the excited appetites, passions, and propensities, or by the various states of the sensibility. Whenever the will yields to these excited states, you sin. But, in such cases, the sin is not willful, in the sense of being deliberate and intentional; it is rather a slip, an inadvertency, a momentary yielding under the pressure of highly excited feeling. Nevertheless, this yielding is sin.

11. Hence, the taking on of a greater fullness of the Divine nature is a condition of growth in the favour of God. Both the will and the sensibility of God must be in a state of utmost perfection and accord. All of His desires and feelings must be in perfect harmony with His intelligence and His will.

Not so with us, in our state of physical depravity. The depravity of the sensibility must be physical because it is involuntary. Still, it is depravity, it is a lapsed or fallen state of the sensibility. This lapsed department of our nature must be recovered, sanctified, or completely restored to harmony with a consecrated will, and an enlightened intelligence, or we are never fitted for heaven. As we become more and more the partakers of the Divine nature, and of

the Divine holiness, we are more fully sanctified in spirit, soul, and body, and of course grow more and more in the favour of God.

12. A greater and more all-pervading fullness of the Holy Spirit's residence is another condition of growth in the favour of God. You cannot have it too thoroughly impressed upon you that every step in the Christian life is to be taken under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The thing to be attained is the universal teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that in all things you shall be led by the Spirit of God.

13. A deeper personal acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, in all His official work and relations, is a condition of growth in grace. His nature, work, and relations are the theme of the Bible. The Bible presents Him to us in a great variety of relations. In my "Systematic Theology" I have considered some sixty or more of these official relations of Christ to the human race, and these are presented rather as specimens and illustrations than as covering the whole ground of His relations to us.

Now it is one thing to know Christ simply on paper, and as spoken of in the Bible, by reading or hearing of Him, and quite another thing to know Him personally, in these relations. The Bible is the

medium of introduction to Him personally. What is there said of Him is designed to lead us to seek after a personal acquaintance with Him. It is by this personal acquaintance with Him that we are made like Him. It is by direct, personal intercourse with His mind that we take on His image.

Christ has promised to manifest Himself personally to those who love and obey Him. Do not stop short of securing this personal manifestation of Christ to your souls. Your growth in grace will depend upon this. Think not of stopping short of personally knowing Christ, not only in all these relations, but in the fullness of these relations.

Do not overlook the fact that the appropriation of Christ, in each of these relations, is a personal act of faith. It is a putting on of the Lord Jesus Christ, a taking of Him as yours, in each of these relations, as your wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; as your Prophet to teach you, your King to govern you, your High Priest to atone for you, your Mediator, your Advocate, your Strength, your Saviour, your Hiding Place, your High Tower, your Captain and Leader, your Shield, your Defence, your Exceeding Great Reward. In each of these relations, and in all other of His official relations, you need to appropriate Him by faith so as to secure to

you personal intercourse with Him in these relations. Growing in a personal acquaintance with Him, in these relations, is an indispensable condition of growth in His favour.

IV. SOME THINGS THAT ARE NOT PROOF OF GROWTH

1. Growth in knowledge is not conclusive evidence of growth in grace. Some degree of knowledge is indispensable to our being in favour with God; and growth in knowledge is a condition of growth in grace; but knowledge is not grace, and growth in knowledge does not constitute growth in grace. A person may grow ever so much in knowledge, and yet have no grace at all.

2. It is not certain evidence that an individual grows in grace, because he grows in gifts. A professor of religion may increase in gifts, that is, he may become more fluent in prayer, and more eloquent in preaching, or more pathetic in exhortation, without being any more holy.

3. It is not proof that a person grows in grace because he thinks he is doing so. If he keeps Christ before him, in His fullness, as his standard, he will doubtless always, at least in this state of existence,

have but a low estimate of his own attainments. While at the same time, if he sets before himself the Church, or any member of the Church, as a standard, he will be very likely to form a high estimate of his progress in religion, and be very well satisfied with himself.

V. WHAT IS PROOF OF GROWTH IN GRACE

1. An individual who grows in grace is more and more actuated by principle, and less and less by emotion or feeling. I do not mean that such a person has less feeling, but that he acts less under the influence of feeling or emotion. He does things, less because he feels so, and more because it is right.

Converts should know that the way to call emotion or feeling into exercise, is to engage, from principle, in the performance of duty; and that whenever a man engages in the performance of duty from a regard to the authority of God, he may expect, in this way, to call into exercise those feelings for which young converts are so apt to wait. A growing regard to the authority of God, a strengthening of the purpose of obedience, a more firm and constant adherence to what is right, and to what God requires because it is right, at once constitutes, and is an evidence of, growth in grace.

2. Another important evidence of growth in grace is more love to God. By this I do not mean that there will be in all cases a conscious increase of emotions of love to God. But that there will be a strengthening of real attachment to God's character and government.

I do not mean by this that increasing love to God will lead individuals to use carnal weapons, in building up or defending His government; but that if they are true friends to God, the longer they live under His government, the more confidence they have in Him, and the more attachment to Him. This increased attachment will evince itself in a growing veneration for all the institutions of religion, for the Sabbath, and all the commands of God.

3. Another evidence of growth in grace is increased love to men as well as love to God. Growing Christians show by their lives that they become continually more and more inclined to do good to men. Young converts are apt to be chiefly influenced by a special and partial regard to individuals; their relations, or their former companions or neighbours.

As they increase in piety, they feel more and more a desire that the world should be converted to God. They have more and more heart-breaking agony at the dreadful state of men in their sins. And their

views and affections rise and expand, until they feel like God: their bowels of compassion yearn for all men that they might repent and be saved.

4. Those who grow in grace feel more and more self-loathing. They have greater humility and self-abasement. I suppose the saints will increase in this to all eternity. I see nothing in this inconsistent with the happiness of heaven. To all eternity, as the ages roll round, the saints will feel constantly, more and more, how much they deserve to be sent to hell for their wickedness. Growing Christians more and more loathe themselves and wonder how God could have spared such wretches.

5. An increased abhorrence of sin is another mark of growth in grace. When a person feels day by day less and less disposed to compromise with sin, with any sin, in himself, or in others, it is a sign that he is growing in grace. Is it so with you, beloved? Have you daily less and less fellowship with sin in any shape, in yourself and in others? Do you feel more as God feels towards sin?

6. He who grows in grace has less relish for the world. He has less and less desire for its wealth, its honours, its pleasures. A desire for these has less and less influence, as a motive in his mind. He seeks wealth and honour only as instruments of

glorifying God, and of doing good to men.

A person who is growing in grace becomes less and less desirous of worldly company and worldly conversation, and reading worldly books and newspapers. You see a growing Christian engaged in holiness, and you will find he will seize hold of the most spiritual books to read. He will love the company and conversation of the most spiritual Christians. He will relish, and if possible attend, the most pungent and searching spiritual preaching.

7. Increased delight in the fellowship of the saints, is another evidence of growth in grace. The growing Christian loves to unite with others in acts of devotion, and other religious exercises.

8. He who grows in grace finds it more and more easy to exercise a forgiving spirit, and to pray for his enemies. There is nothing in which men, who are in their natural state, more resemble the devil, than in their harbouring angry and revengeful feelings towards those who have injured them. If a person is growing in grace he will find it more and more easy to forgive, and that is costs him less trouble to get over supposed injuries, so as to be able to pray. Can you forgive the greatest injuries at once, so that nothing of the kind can come up between you and God to hinder your prayers?

9. Becoming more and more ready to bestow property is a sign of growth in grace. If a person is growing in grace he will be more and more ready to give, and willing to give ALL that is in his power. He will rejoice to be called on. He will give more and more yearly. If he gives from right motives he will be glad when he has given. And the more he gives the more he loves to give. His giving will be part of his religion, and he will grow in it just as in prayer.

10. He will feel less and less any separate interest. It is a great thing, in regard to growth in grace, to feel that all you have is Christ's, and that you have absolutely no separate interest in living, or in dying, or in holding property, or children, or character. This is a great and solemn lesson to learn. Persons who grow in grace feel that their time, talents, property, life itself, have value, only in their relation to Christ's kingdom.

11. It is an evidence of growth in grace when a person becomes more willing to confess faults to men. This is a point often hard to learn. Men are willing to confess to God, because they have not so far to stoop to do this. But to confess fully and frankly to men is a great stoop for a proud heart. But when they grow in grace, they would just as soon confess a fault, and confess it frankly, to a servant,

or an enemy, or the lowest member of society, as to the most exalted individuals. Do you know this? If you cannot do this, be sure you are not growing in grace, if you have any grace.

12. Growing in grace raises a person more and more above the world. The growing saint regards less and less either the good or ill opinions of men.

13. If you grow in grace you must expect very frequent and agonizing conflicts with Satan. Satan has very little trouble with those Christians who are not spiritual, but lukewarm, and slothful, and worldly minded. And such do not understand what is said about spiritual conflicts. Perhaps they will smile when such things are mentioned. And so the devil lets them alone; they do not disturb him, nor he them. But spiritual Christians, he understands very well, are doing him a vast injury, and therefore he sets himself against them. Such Christians often have terrible conflicts. They have temptations that they never thought of before: blasphemous thoughts, atheism, suggestions to do deeds of wickedness, to destroy their own lives, and the like. And if you are spiritual, you may expect these terrible conflicts.

14. Another evidence of growth in grace, is an increasing weanedness from the world.

15. Less temptation to sins of omission, is another evidence of growth in grace.

16. A growing tranquility under sudden and crushing disasters and bereavements, is an evidence of growth in grace.

17. Less temptation to dwell upon, and to magnify our trials and troubles, to think of them, and speak of them to others, is evidence that we think less of self, and accept our trials and troubles with more and more complacency in God, and consider them as "light afflictions."

18. A growing and realizing confidence in the wisdom, benevolence, and universality of the providence of God, a state of mind that sees God in everything.

19. When we find ourselves more and more readily impressed and affected, quickened and stimulated by religious truth, and when we find an increasing harmony in the action of all our powers, intellectual, voluntary, and sensitive, in accepting, and resting in, the whole will and providence of God, however afflictive they may be at present, we have evidence that we are growing in grace.

20. A growing jealousy for the honour of God, for the purity and honour of His Church, for the rights of

God, and for the rights of all men, is evidence of growing in conformity to God, and of growing in His favour.

VI. HOW TO GROW IN GRACE

1. Fulfill the conditions noticed under the third head of this lecture.

2. Young converts should watch against their besetting sins, such as levity. This is the besetting sin of many persons, and unless they place a tenfold watch at the door of their lips, they will never grow in grace. Once yielding to a spirit of levity may grieve the Holy Spirit and put out your light for a day; and giving way once, but makes way for a repetition; so that unless you begin with decision and continue with great prayer and watchings, to keep down the spirit of levity, you are undone.

3. Censoriousness. Young converts are particularly in danger of this. They enter upon religion full of ardour, and they are soon amazed at the coldness and apathy of old professors of religion. And so they are liable to say hard and censorious things about them.

But they ought to learn carefully to distinguish between the deep principles of ripe Christians, and

the lively feelings of young converts. And whatever may be their sober judgment about the state of others, young converts ought to be very careful what they say of them. Do not speak censoriously of any; if you do, you grieve away the Holy Spirit, and you will not grow in grace.

4. Anger. How many Christians are injured by letting their temper rise. If they be women, they fret at their servants. Men fret at their clerks, or at those who are in their employment; or they get angry with the government, or with their neighbours; they go to finding fault in some way or other, that shows they do not watch their temper. How can they grow in grace?

5. Pride. Guard against pride and vanity in all their forms. Be very careful never to purchase an article of dress, or furniture, or anything calculated to foster vanity in your mind. Woman! You are going to buy a hat; be careful not to get one that will make you think of it when you wear it. Alas! how much pains some people take to foster their own bad passions. The devil might go to sleep in regard to some Christians; he has no need to lie in wait to tempt them &endash; they tempt themselves.

6. Selfishness in all its forms. Here is the great root of all the difficulty. This is the foundation, the

fountain, the substance, and sum total, of all the iniquity under heaven. Watch here; look out constantly; see where self comes out in your conduct, and there set a guard. If you are making a bargain, see to it that you do not act from selfish motives. Deal just as you would if you were dying. Do as you would be done by.

7. Sloth. This is an evil enough to ruin the world. How many converts stop and decline by sloth. In plain terms, they get lazy; like idle servants, they saunter about as if they had nothing to do, they will not take hold of the work, they are mere eye-servants, unprofitable enough, a moth in the church.

8. Envy. If you see others going ahead of you in prosperity, in influence, in talents, examine your feelings, and see whether you are pleased at it. If the sight gives pain, beware!

9. Ambition. By this sin angels fell, and it is impossible to grow in grace without suppressing it.

10. Impure thoughts. We are so much under the influence of sensible objects, that unless we watch diligently, before we are aware, we are perverted with impure thoughts. It is necessary to make a covenant with our eyes, and with our ears too, and all our senses, or they will prove the inlet of

temptation and sin. If you find yourself in danger, turn your thoughts away instantly.

11. Another direction for growing in grace is, take care to exercise all the Christian graces. Exercise yourself especially in those things where you find yourself most deficient.

12. Exercise decision of character. In nothing is decision of character so indispensable as in religion. To walk with God a man must walk contrary to the course of the world. He must face public sentiment and go abreast, not unfrequently, of the opinions of all the world, and nearly of all the church. If, on the one hand he can be awed by opposition, or, on the other, courted by smiles and flattery, he will be certain not to make headway, and stem the tide that is bearing him away from God. Very few persons exercise sufficient decision to maintain a spirit of prayer. No person can enjoy the spirit of prayer, who does not maintain a conscience void of offence, towards God and man. He must be willing to know, and do, all his duty.

A man must maintain great firmness of purpose, and great decision of character, to be undeviating in the performance of secret duties. Men are so apt to neglect secret prayer and private duties, when they do not at the time feel disposed to engage in them,

that without uncommon energy of character, even the form of private duties will be more or less punctually attended to, according to the state of feeling in which the Christian finds himself at the time.

13. To grow in grace a man must possess great meekness. Meekness is patience under injuries. In such cases he must learn to possess his soul in patience. When he is reviled, he must learn not to revile again. And if he is persecuted, to threaten not.

14. Remember that every step of progress must be made by faith and not by works. Every step of progress in the Christian life is taken by a fresh and fuller appropriation of Christ by faith, a fuller baptism of the Holy Spirit.

VII. SOME THINGS THAT ARE EVIDENCES OF DECLENSION.

1. The person who grows weary of being asked to give for promoting the kingdom of Christ is evidently declining. He says, "Now I think I have given about enough, there seems to be no end to it, and I mean to stop; there are so many agents constantly begging, it is time to break it up." If you hear a man talk in that style, depend upon it he is either a

hypocrite, and has never given from right motives at all, or he is a backslider, and is declining rapidly in piety.

2. Becoming backward to converse on the subject of religion, and particularly to converse on spiritual and experimental, and heart-searching points, is evidence of declension. Young converts, when they are in the ardour of their first love, delight to pour out their hearts in spiritual conversation; and when they lose their relish for this, you may be sure they are declining in piety.

3. When a person is less disposed to engage in the duties of devotion, public, social, or private, it is a sign of declension. If he does not love so well to pray, and read his Bible, and draw near to God, he must be declining in piety.

4. Taking more delight in public meetings than in secret communion with God, is another evidence of a declining state. Those who enjoy religion, enjoy themselves nowhere so well as in secret with God.

5. Feeling less delight in revivals of religion, is a sad token of declension. The young convert delights in revivals. How eagerly he seeks to know where there are revivals. How he dwells on such blessed outpouring of the Spirit of God. But when he

declines in piety, he becomes less anxious to know about revivals.

6. A person that becomes captious about measures used in promoting revivals, is in a declining state. If you find yourself growing very much afraid of the measures that good men pursue, and that God owns and blesses, for promoting revivals, you are evidently declining.

VIII. HOW TO ESCAPE FROM A STATE OF DECLENSION.

1. You must admit the conviction that you are in a state of declension.

2. Apply to yourself all that God says to backsliders, just as if you were the only individual in the world in that condition.

3. Find out the point where you began to decline. See what was the first cause of your backsliding, and give that up. You will often find this first cause where you did not expect it, in some thing which you called a little matter, or that you tried to make yourself believe was not a sin.

God will always hold you at arm's length, and will frown upon you when you pray, unless you search out and remove the cause of your declension. Give

up your idols.

4. Be careful to apply afresh to the Lord Jesus Christ, for pardon, and peace with God. Go to Him just as you did at first, as a guilty, condemned sinner, more deserving of hell than ever. Apply to this fountain, which is set open in the House of David for sin and uncleanness. Confess your sin fully, and forsake them, and thus return to God, and He will have mercy on you, and will heal your backslidings, and remember your iniquities no more.

REMARKS.

See why revivals cease. When there is a revival, and Christians are awake, and get a certain point, and then are carried no further, the revival will cease of course. There are but few persons that grow in grace. I have no doubt that if persons would do as they might, and give the attention to it that they ought, the generality of professors of religion might grow more in six months than they do now in all their lives. If the church is kept advancing, the revival will not cease. If the instructions given, and the measures used, keep the church going ahead, and the young converts growing in grace, the revival will go on.

Chapter II
INSTRUCTIONS TO CONVERTS

Feed My lambs. John 21:15

These words were addressed by the Lord Jesus to Peter, after he had denied Him and had professed repentance. Probably one of the designs which Jesus had in view in suffering Peter to sin so awfully, was to produce a deeper work of grace in his heart, and thus fit him for the peculiar duty to which He intended to call him, in laying the foundations of the Christian Church, and watching over the spiritual interests of the converts.

In this lecture I am going to discuss the manner in which young converts should be treated, and the instructions which should be given to them.

I. SEVERAL IMPORTANT POINTS CONCERNING THE HOPES OF YOUNG CONVERTS.

1. Nothing should be said to them to create a hope. Nothing should ordinarily be intimated to persons under conviction, calculated to make them think they are converted.

It is best to let their hope or belief that they are converted spring up spontaneously in their own

minds. Sometimes it will happen that persons may be really converted, but owing to some notions which they have been taught about religion they do not realize it. Their views of what religion is, and its effect upon the mind, are so entirely wide of the truth, that they do not think they have it. Suppose they do not see it at once; they break down lower than ever, and then they will come out so clear and decided, that they will know where they are.

2. When you see persons expressing a hope, and yet expressing doubts too, it is generally because the work is not thorough; they need breaking up. They are still lingering in the world, or they have not broken off effectually from their sins, and they need to be pushed back, rather than forward. If you see reason to doubt, or if you find that they have doubts, most probably there is some good reason to doubt.

Sometimes persons express a hope in Christ, and afterwards remember some sin that needs to be confessed to men; or some case where they have slandered, or defrauded, where it is necessary to make satisfaction, and where either their character, or their purse, is to be deeply implicated that they hesitate, and refuse to perform their duty. This grieves the Spirit, and brings darkness over their minds, and justly leads them to doubt whether they

are truly converted.

If a soul is truly converted, it will generally be found where there are doubts, that on some point they are neglecting duty. They should be searched as with a lighted candle, and brought up to the performance of duty, and not suffered to think they are Christians until they do it. Ordinarily, it is proper just there to throw into their minds some plain and searching truth, that will go through them, something that will wither their hopes like a moth. Do it while the Spirit of God is dealing with the, and do it in a right way, and there is no danger of its doing harm.

By such a mode of treatment, I have often known people of the crookedest and most hateful natural character so transformed in the course of a few days, that they appeared like different beings. You would think that the work of a whole life of Christian cultivation had been done at once. Doubtless this was the intent of the Savior's dealing with Peter.

II. SOME POINTS CONCERNING MAKING A PROFESSION OF RELIGION.

1. Young converts should, ordinarily, offer themselves to some church of Christ immediately. They should not wait. If they set out in religion by

waiting, most likely they will always be waiting, and never do anything to much purpose. If they are taught to wait under conviction, before they give themselves to Christ; or if they are taught to wait after conversion, before they give themselves publicly to God by joining the Church, they will probably go halting and stumbling along all their lives. The first thing they should be taught always is, never wait when God has pointed out your duty.

2. Sometimes persons who are known to entertain a hope, dare not make a profession of religion for fear they should be deceived. I always deal decidedly with such cases. A hope that will not warrant a profession of religion is manifestly worse than no hope, and the sooner it is torn away the better. Shall a man hope he loves God, and yet dares not obey Jesus Christ? Preposterous! Such a hope had better be given up at once.

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING RIGHT INSTRUCTIONS TO YOUNG CONVERTS.

Ordinarily, their Christian character through life is moulded and fashioned according to the manner in which they are dealt with when first converted. There are many who have been poorly taught at first, but have been afterwards reconverted, and if

they are then properly dealt with, they may make good.

But the proper time to do this is when they are first brought in, when their minds are soft and tender, and easily yield to the truth. Then they may be led by a slender thread, if they think it is the truth of God. And whatever notions in religion they then get, they are apt to cleave to forever afterwards.

IV. SOME THINGS WHICH SHOULD NOT BE TAUGHT TO YOUNG CONVERTS

1. "You will not always feel as you do now." When the young convert is rejoicing in his Savior, and determining to live for the glory of God and the good of mankind, how often he is told this. Thus preparing his mind to expect that he shall backslide, and to not be much surprised if he does. This is just the way the devil wants young converts dealt with: to have older Christians tell them, "Your feelings will not last, by and by, you will be as cold as we are." It has made my heart bleed to see it.

Such doctrine as this is the very last thing that should be taught to young converts. They should be told that now they have only begun the Christian life, and that their religion is to consist in going on in it.

They should be taught to go forward all the time, and grow in grace continually. Do not teach them to taper off their religion. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more to the perfect day." Now, whose path is that which groweth dimmer and dimmer until the perfect night?

2. "Wait until you get strength, before you take up the cross." This is applied to various religious duties. Sometimes it is applied to prayer, as if prayer were a cross. I have known young converts to be advised not to attempt to pray in their families, or in meetings. "Wait until you get strength." Just as if they could get strength without exercise. Strength comes by exercise. You cannot get strength by lying still. To talk to a convert about neglecting Christian action until he gets strength, is absurd. If he wants to gain strength, let him get to work.

3. Young converts should not be made sectarian in their feelings. They should not be taught to dwell upon sectarian distinctions, or to be sticklish about sectarian points. They ought to examine these points at a proper time, and in a proper way, and make up their minds for themselves, according to their importance. But they should not be taught to dwell upon them, or to make much of them in the outset of their religious life. Otherwise there is great

danger that their whole religion will run into sectarianism. I have seen most sad and melancholy exhibitions of the effect of this upon young converts.

V. SOME THINGS WHICH SHOULD BE TAUGHT TO YOUNG CONVERTS.

1. Young converts should be taught to distinguish between emotion and principle in religion. Do you understand me? I am going to explain what I mean, but I want you to get hold of the words, and to have them fixed in your minds.

By emotion, I mean that state of mind of which we are conscious, and which we call feeling: an involuntary state of mind that arises naturally when we are in certain circumstances or under certain influences. There may be highly wrought feelings, or they may subside into tranquility, or disappear entirely. But these emotions should be carefully distinguished from religious principle.

By principle, I do not mean any substance or root or seed implanted in the soul. But I mean the voluntary decision of the mind, the firm determination to do one's duty, and to obey the will of God, by which a Christian should always be governed.

When a man is fully determined to obey God, because it is right he should obey God: I call that principle. Whether he feels any lively religious emotion at the time or not, he will do his duty cheerfully, and readily, and heartily, whatever may be the state of his feelings. This is acting upon principle and not from emotion.

Young converts should be carefully taught, when duty is before them to do it. However dull your feelings may be, if duty calls, DO IT. Most likely the very emotions for which you wait will spontaneously arise when you begin to do your duty. If the duty be prayer, for instance, and you have not the feelings you would wish, do not wait for emotions before you pray, but pray, and in doing it you are most likely to have the emotions for which you were inclined to wait, and which constitute the conscious happiness of religion.

2. Young converts should be taught that in turning to God, they have renounced the ownership of all their possessions, and of themselves, or if they have not done this they are not Christians. They should not be left to think that anything is their own: time, property, influence, faculties, bodies or souls. "Ye are not your own." All belongs to God.

When they submitted to God, they made a full

surrender of all to Him, to be ruled and disposed of at His pleasure. They have no right to spend one hour as if their time were their won. No right to go anywhere, or to do anything, for themselves, but should hold all at the disposal of God, and employ all for the glory of God. If they do not, they ought not to call themselves Christians, for the very idea of being a Christian is to renounce self and become entirely consecrated to God.

3. Teach them to cultivate a tender conscience. I have often been amazed to find how little conscience there is, even among those we hope are Christians. And here we see the reason of it; their consciences were never cultivated. They have not even a natural conscience. They have dealt so rudely with their conscience, and resisted it so often, that it has got blunted, and does not act.

It is astonishing to see how much the conscience may be cultivated by a proper course. If rightly attended to, it may be made so pure, and so powerful, that it will always respond exactly to the Word of God. Present any duty to such a Christian, or any self-denial, or suffering, and only show him the Word of God, and he will do it without an objection. In a few months, if properly taught and attended to, young converts may have a conscience

so delicately poised that the weight of a feather will turn it. Only bring a "Thus saith the Lord," and they will always be ready to do that, be it what it may.

4. Young converts should be taught to pray without ceasing. That is, they should always keep a watch over their minds, and be all the time in a prayerful spirit. They should be taught to pray always, whatever may take place. For the want of right instruction of this point many young converts suffer loss and get far away from God.

Sometimes it happens that a young convert will fall into some sin, and then he feels that he cannot pray, and instead of overcoming this, he feels so distressed that he waits until the keen edge of his distress passes away. Instead of going right to Jesus in the midst of his agony, and confessing his sin out of the fullness of his heart, and getting a renewed pardon, and peace restored, he waits until all the keenness of his feelings has subsided, and then his repentance, if he does repent, is cold and halfhearted. Let me tell you beloved, never do this; but when your conscience presses you, go then to Christ, confess your sin fully, and pour out your heart to God, and the Spirit may come upon you at once, and lead your heart out in prayer, and all the dark clouds will pass away.

5. Young converts should be faithfully warned against adopting a false standard in religion. They should not be allowed to fall in behind the old professors of religion, or to keep them before their minds as a standard of holy living. They should always look at Christ as their model. Not just aiming at being a good Christian as the old church members; but they should aim at being holy, and not rest satisfied until they are as perfect as God. The Church has been greatly injured for want of attention to this matter.

6. They must be taught not to aim at comfort, but usefulness in religion. There are a great many spiritual epicures in the churches, who are all the while seeking to be happy in religion, while they are taking very little pains to be useful. They much rather spend their time in singing joyful hymns, and pouring out their happy feelings in a gushing tide of exultation and triumph, then to spend it in agonizing prayer for sinners, or in going about and pulling dying men out of the fire. They seem to feel as if they were born to enjoy themselves. But I do not think that such Christians show such fruits as to make their example one to be imitated.

Such was not the temper of the apostles, they travailed for souls, and laboured in weariness and

painfulness, and in deaths oft, to save sinners. Ordinarily, Christians are not qualified to drink deeply at the fountain of joy. In ordinary cases, a deep agony of prayer for souls is more profitable than high flights of joy. Let young converts be taught plainly not to calculate upon a life of joy and triumph. They may be called to go through fiery trials; Satan may sift them like wheat. They must go forward, not calculating so much to be happy as to be useful; not talking about comfort but duty; not desiring flights of joy and triumph, but hungering and thirsting after righteousness; not studying how to create new flights of rapture, but how to know the will of God and do it. They will be happy enough in heaven. There they may sing the song of Moses and of the Lamb. And they will in fact enjoy a more solid and rational happiness here, by patiently devoting themselves to do the will of God.

7. They must learn to say, NO! This is a very difficult lesson to many. See that young woman; formerly she loved the gay circle, and took delight in its pleasures; she joined the church, and then found herself aloof from all her old associates. They ask her not now to their balls and parties, because they know she will not join them; and perhaps they keep entirely away for a time, for fear she should

converse with them about their souls.

But, by and by, they grow a little bold, and some of them venture to ask her just to take a ride with a few friends. She does not like to say, No! They are her old friends, only a few of them are going, and surely a ride is so innocent a recreation, that she accepts the invitation. But now she has begun to comply, the ice is broken, and they have her again as one of them.

It goes on, and she begins to attend their social visits, "Only a few friends, you know," until by and by, the carpet is taken up for a dance; and the next thing, perhaps, she is gone to a sleigh ride on a Saturday night, and comes home after midnight, and then sleeps all the forenoon on the Sabbath to make up for it, perhaps Communion Sabbath too. All for the want of learning to say, No! Go a little further without learning to say, No! and you are undone. If you do not wish to hang up the cause of Christ to scorn and contempt, learn to resist the beginnings of temptation.

8. It is of great importance that young converts should be taught to be strictly honest. I mean more by this than perhaps you think. It is a great thing to be strictly honest. It is being very different from the world at large, and different even from the great

body of professors of religion. The holiest man I ever knew, and one who had been many years a Christian and a minister, once made the remark to me, "Brother, it is a great thing to be strictly honest, upright, straight in everything, so that God's pure eye can see that your mind is perfectly upright." Alas, alas! how little conscience there is. How little of that real honesty, that pure, simple uprightness, which ought to mark the life of a child of God.

9. Teach them that religion does not consist in raptures, or ecstasies, or high flights of feeling. There may be a great deal of these where there is religion; but it ought to be understood that they are all involuntary emotions, and may exist in full power where there is no religion. They may be the mere workings of the imagination, without any truly religious affection at all. I have known one person almost carried away with raptures, by a mere view of the natural attributes of God, His power and wisdom, and yet the person had no religion. Religion is obedience to God, the voluntary submission of the soul to the will of God.

10. They should be made to understand that nothing which is selfish is religion. Whatever desires they may have, and whatever choices and actions they may put forth, if, after all, the reason of them is

selfish, there is no religion in them.

Nothing is acceptable to God, as religion, unless it be performed heartily, to please God. No outward action has anything good, or anything that God approves, unless it is performed from right motives and from the heart.

Young converts should be taught fully and positively that all religion consists in obeying God from the heart. All religion consists in voluntary action. All that is holy, all that is lovely in the sight of God, all that is properly called religion, consists in voluntary action, in voluntarily obeying the will of God from the heart.

11. Young converts should be taught that the duty of self-denial is one of the leading features of the Gospel. They should understand that they are not pious at all, any further than they are willing to take up the cross daily, and deny themselves for Christ.

Jesus Christ exercised self-denial to save sinners. God the Father exercised self-denial in giving His Son to die for us, and in sparing us, and in bearing with our perverseness. The Holy Ghost exercises self-denial in condescending to strive with such unholy being to bring them to God. The angels exercise self-denial in watching over this world. The

apostles planted the Christian religion among the nations by the exercise of self-denial. And are we to think of being religious without any self-denial.

12. Young converts, by proper instructions, are easily brought to be "temperate in all things." Yet this is a subject which is greatly neglected in regard to converts, and is almost lost sight of in the churches. There is a vast amount of intemperance in the churches. I do not mean intemperate drinking, in particular, but intemperance in eating, and in living generally. There is in fact but little conscience about it in the churches, and therefore the progress of reform in the matter is so slow. Until Christians have a conscience on this subject, and be made to feel that they have no right to be intemperate in anything, they will make but little progress in religion.

13. They should be taught to have just as much religion in all their business, as they have in prayer, or in going to meeting. They should be just as holy, just as watchful, aim just as singly at the glory of God, be just as sincere and solemn, in all their daily employments, as when they come to the throne of grace. If they are not, their Sabbath performances will be an abomination.

14. They should aim at being perfect. Every young

convert should be taught, that if it is not his purpose to live without sin, he has not yet begun to be religious. What is religion but a supreme purpose of heart or disposition to obey God? If there is not this, there is no religion at all. If any are prepared to say they are perfect, let them prove it. If they are so, I believe they will show it by their actions, otherwise we can never believe they are perfect.

But it is the duty of all to aim at being perfect. It should be their constant purpose to live wholly to God, and obey all His commandments. They should live so, that if they should sin it would be an exception, an individual case, in which they act contrary to the fixed and general purpose and tenor of their lives. They ought not to sin at all, they are bound to be as holy as God is; and young converts should be taught to set out in the right course, or they will never be right.

15. They should be taught to exhibit their light. If the young convert does not exhibit his light, and hold it up to the world, it will go out. Let him use what he has; let him hold up his little twinkling rush-light, boldly and honestly, and then God will pour in the oil and make him like a blazing torch. But God will not take the trouble to keep a light burning that is hidden. Why should He? What is the use?

16. They should be taught how to win souls to Christ. Converts should be taught particularly what to do for this, and how to do it; and then be taught to live for this end as the great leading object of life. The great object for which Christians are converted and left in this world, is, to pull sinners out of the fire. If they do not effect this, they had better be dead. Young converts should be taught this as soon as they are born into the kingdom of God.

VI. HOW YOUNG CONVERTS SHOULD BE TREATED BY THE CHURCH.

1. Old professors of religion ought to be able to give converts a great deal of instruction, and they ought to give it.

2. Young converts should not be kept back behind the rest of the church. How often it is found that old professors of religion will keep the young converts back behind the rest of the church, and prevent them from taking any active part in religion, for fear they should become spiritually proud. Whereas, the very way to make young converts humble and keep them so, is to put them to their work and keep them there. That is the way to keep God with them, and as long as He is with them, He will take care of their humility.

3. They should be watched over by the church, and warned of their dangers, just as a tender mother watches over her young children. Young converts do not know the dangers by which they are surrounded; the devices of the devil, the temptations of the world, the power of their own passions and habits, and the thousand forms of danger they do not know; and if not properly watched and warned, they will run right into danger.

4. Be tender in reproving them. When Christians find it necessary to reprove young converts, they should be exceedingly careful of their manner in doing it.

Many persons, under pretence of being faithful, as they call it, often hurt young converts by such a severe and overbearing manner, as to drive them away, or perhaps crush them into despondency and apathy. Young converts have but little experience, and are easily thrown down. They are just like a little child when it first begins to walk. The churches ought to take up every stumbling-block, and treat them in such a way as to make them see that if they are reproved Christ is in it, and then they will receive it as it is meant, and it will do them good.

VII. SOME OF THE EVILS OF DEFECTIVE INSTRUCTION.

1. If not fully instructed, converts will never be fully grounded in right principles. If they have right fundamental principles, this will lead them to adopt a right course of conduct in all particular cases. In forming a Christian character, a great deal depends on establishing those fundamental principles which are correct on all subjects.

2. If young converts are rightly instructed and trained, it will generally be seen that they will take the right side on all the great subjects that come before the church. It is curious to see how ready young converts are to take right ground, on any subject that may be proposed. See what they are willing to do for the education of ministers, for missions, moral reform, for the slaves. If the great body of converts from the late revivals had been well grounded in Gospel principles, you would have found in them throughout the churches, but one heart and one soul in regard to every question of duty that occurs. Let their early education be right, and you have got a body of Christians that you can depend on. If this had been general in the Church, how much more strength there would have been in all her great movements for the salvation of the

world.

3. If young converts are not well instructed they will inevitably backslide. If their instruction is defective, they will probably live in such a way as to disgrace religion. The truth, kept steadily before the mind of a young convert, in proper proportions, has a natural tendency to make him grow up into the fullness of the stature of a perfect man in Jesus Christ. If any one point is made too prominent in the instruction given, there will probably be just that disproportion in his character.

REMARKS.

The Church is guilty for her past neglect in regard to the instruction of young converts. Instead of bringing them up to be working Christians, churches have generally acted as if they did not know how to employ young converts, or what use to make of them. If the Church had only done her duty in training up young converts to work and labour for Christ, the world would have been converted long ago.

Young converts should be trained to labour for Christ, just as carefully as young recruits in any army are trained for war. Suppose a captain in the

army should get his company enlisted, and then take no more pains to teach, train, and discipline them, than are taken by many pastors to train and lead forward their young converts. Why, the enemy would laugh at such an army. Call them soldiers? Why, as to any effective service, they don't know what to do nor how to do it, and if you bring them up to the CHARGE, where are they? Such an army would resemble the church that does not train her young converts. Instead of being trained to stand shoulder to shoulder, they feel no practical confidence in their leaders, no confidence in themselves, and they scatter at the first shock of battle.

And so it must continue, until the Church shall train up young converts to be intelligent, single-hearted, self-denying, working Christians. The plan is to train a body of devoted Christians, who know how to pray, and how to converse with people about their souls, and how to attend anxious meetings, and deal with enquirers, and how to SAVE SOULS.

THE END.